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**A State-Sponsored Socio-Environmental
Development Programme in Action:
the *ProAmbiente*, Amazonia, Brazil**

Ana Maria de Albuquerque Vasconcellos

**Centre for Development Studies
School of Environment and Society
Swansea University
July 2008**

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**A State-Sponsored Socio-Environmental
Development Programme in Action:
the *ProAmbiente*, Amazonia, Brazil**

Ana Maria de Albuquerque Vasconcellos

**Thesis submitted to Swansea University in fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree of PhD**

Supervisors: Dr. Suranjit Kumar Saha and Dr. Tim Bowyer

**Swansea – Wales
July 2008**



Dedicated to

Mario for his unconditional support, solidarity and love

and

Mayana and Mayro for their love and happiness

DECLARATION AND STATEMENTS

Declaration

This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

Date: 03/07/2008

Ana Maria de Albuquerque Vasconcellos

Statement 1

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ABSTRACT

The thesis seeks to demonstrate the space of interaction that has emerged between federal government and rural communities during the implementation of a state-sponsored socio-environmental development programme at community level in Brazilian Amazonia. This thesis seeks to show how demands from the grass-roots has scaled up to public policy, incorporated changes and has scaled down to local communities during the implementation process. Secondly, it investigates how a state-sponsored development programme – using a popular participation approach, carried out by federal government and intermediated by NGOs – interacts with, and impacts on, local communities. The research deals with: (1) the socio-political context that influenced the creation of a socio-environmental development programme for rural communities in Brazilian Amazonia; (2) the route of identification, incorporation and changes of rural communities' priorities within the programme; and (3) the impacts of the programme actions on rural communities.

The *ProAmbiente* (a socio-environmental development programme for rural family-based production) was chosen for examination as a case study because it seeks to implement a new logic of production in rural Amazonia conceptualised by federal government as productive conservation. This concept seeks to provide a link between the growth of production in the rural economy and the conservation of the environment.

Through a methodology involving three levels of qualitative analysis (macro-, intermediary- and local-level), the study reconstitutes the socio-political context that influenced the creation of the *ProAmbiente*, describes the mechanisms of interaction between the federal government and the rural communities, points to the factors that have facilitated and/or hampered the implementation of the *ProAmbiente*, reveals contradictions within the *ProAmbiente* implementation and shows the impacts of the programme on the rural communities. Using material from communities, the NGOs and the governmental sources, research was conducted in Brasília (capital of Brazil), Belém (capital of Pará state) and six rural communities (three communities located in the *município* of Soure and three located in the *município* of Concórdia do Pará), within Pará state.

The research shows that the interaction between social movements, NGOs and political parties is an important mechanism to press federal government for the construction of a development programme. From this interaction it was possible to incorporate local people's voices and scale up rural communities' demands for the creation of a public space for interaction between local people and the federal government. However, the research reveals that once the state encompasses local people's demands and creates a development programme, the development model absorbs multi-actor interests that change local people's proposals. In the case of the *ProAmbiente*, the external pressure for conservation of the environment resulted in the creation of the concept of productive conservation to develop livelihoods that should be mediated by local people's culture and knowledge. However, the research shows that, although the *ProAmbiente* recognises local people's culture and knowledge, in practice these issues are not viewed as a priority in the programme's actions. The research concludes that the *ProAmbiente* and similar programmes that pay individual families for environmental protection should not be conducted in isolation but in conjunction with the complementary programmes that address local people's needs for educational, health and land titling services.

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This study represents the realization of a lifelong dream and the culmination of a journey that consumed many years of my life. This journey is a mix of different feelings such as pleasure, unhappiness and the most importantly, being fortunate to experience much growth. I wish to recognise the incredible people who loved me and believed in me enough to support me in the most difficult paths I faced. This achievement is a celebration for all of those people. I want to share the results of this study with all of these people.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADA	Agência de Desenvolvimento da Amazônia Development Agency for Amazonia
ADN	Agência do Desenvolvimento do Nordeste Development Agency for the North-East
APP	Áreas de Preservação Permanente Permanent Preservation Areas
BASA	Banco da Amazônia S.A. Bank of Amazonia plc.
BNDS	Banco Nacional de Desenvolvimento Econômico e Social National Bank for Economic and Social Development
CBA	Associações Comunitárias de Base Community-Based Associations
CDM	Mecanismo de Desenvolvimento Limpo Clean Development Mechanism
CEBs	Comunidade Eclesiástica de Base Grassroots Ecclesiastic Communities
CIFOR	Centro para Pesquisa Florestal Internacional Center for International Forestry Research
CNBB	Confederação Nacional dos Bispos do Brasil Brazilian Bishop's National Confederation
CNP	Confederação Nacional dos Pescadores National Confederation of Fishermen
CNPT	Centro Nacional de Populações Tradicionais e Desenvolvimento Sustentável Traditional Populations and Sustainable Development National Centre
CNS	Conselho Nacional dos Seringueiros Rubber Tappers' National Council
CONGEN	Conselho Gestor Nacional National Management Council
CONGEP	Conselho Gestor dos Pólos Pole's Management Council
CONGES	Conselho Gestor Estadual Regional Management Council
CONTAG	Confederação Nacional dos Trabalhadores na Agricultura National Confederation of Workers in Agriculture

CPT	Comissão Pastoral da Terra Church Land Commission
CRAF	Centro Mundial Florestal Forestry World Centre
CUT	Central Única dos Trabalhadores Workers' Union Confederation
ECOTAX	Taxas Ambientais Environment Tax
EMATER	Empresa de Assistência Técnica e Extensão Rural Institute of Technical Assistance and Rural Services Support
EMBRAPA	Empresa Brasileira de Pesquisa Agropecuária Brazilian Agricultural Research Institute
FANEP	Fundação Sócio-ambiental do Nordeste Paraense North-East Pará Socio-Environmental Foundation
FASE	Federação de Órgãos para Assistência Social e Educacional Federation of Social and Education Assistance Agencies
FC	Fundos Constitucionais de Financiamento Financing Constitutional Funds
FCO	Fundo Constitucional do Centro-Oeste Constitutional Fund for the Centre-West Region
FEPA	Federação dos Pescadores do Estado do Pará Pará State Federation of Fishermen
FETAGRI	Federação dos Trabalhadores e Trabalhadoras da Agricultura Federation of Agriculture Workers
FETAGRI/PA	Federação dos Trabalhadores e Trabalhadoras da Agricultura do Estado do Pará Pará State Federation of Agriculture Workers
FETAGS	Federação dos Trabalhadores e Trabalhadoras na Agricultura da Amazônia Legal Legal Amazonia Agriculture Workers Federation
FNE	Fundo Constitucional do Nordeste Constitutional Fund for the North-East Region
FNMA	Fundo Nacional do Meio Ambiente National Fund for the Environment
FNO	Fundo Constitucional do Norte Constitutional Fund for the Northern Region

FNO Rural-Especial	Fundo Constitucional do Norte Especial para a Área Rural Special FNO for Rural Areas
FP	Plano Familiar Family Plan
FSA	Fundo de Serviços Ambientais Environmental Service Fund
FUNRURAL	Fundo de Assistência e Previdência do Trabalhador Rural Fund for the Assistance and Insurance of Rural Workers
GTA	Grupo de Trabalho Amazônico Amazonian Work Group
IBAMA	Instituto Brasileiro do Meio Ambiente e Recursos Naturais Renováveis Brazilian Institute for the Environment and Renewable Natural Resources
IBGE	Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics
ICMS	Imposto Sobre Circulação de Mercadoria e Serviço Commercial and Service Tax
IICA	Instituto Interamericano de Cooperação para a Agricultura Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture
INCRA	Instituto Nacional de Colonização e Reforma Agrária Colonisation and Agrarian Reform National Institute
INPE	Instituto Nacional de Pesquisas Espaciais National Institute for Spatial Research
IPAM	Instituto de Pesquisa Ambiental da Amazônia Amazonian Environmental Research Institute
IPEA	Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada Institute of Applied Economic Research
IPI	Imposto sobre Produtos Industrializados Industrial Production Tax
MDA	Ministério do Desenvolvimento Agrário Ministry of Agrarian Development
MMA	Ministerio do Meio Ambiente Environment Ministry
MODESTE	Movimento do Nordeste Paraense North-East Pará Movement

MONAPE	Movimento Nacional dos Pescadores National Movement of Fishermen
MONEPA	Movimento das Mulheres do Nordeste Paraense North-East Pará Women's Movement
MST	Movimento dos Sem Terra Landless Movement
MSTR	Movimento Sindical dos Trabalhadores Rurais Rural Workers' Union Movement
NGO	Organização Não Governamental Non-Governmental Organisation
NOSSA NATUREZA	Programa Nossa Natureza Our Nature Programme
PADEQ	Projeto de Alternativas ao Desmatamento e Queimadas Alternatives to Deforestation and Forest Burning Project
PDA	Plano de Desenvolvimento da Amazônia Amazonia Development Plan
PDR	Programa de Desenvolvimento Rural Rural Development Programme
PDSP	Plano de Desenvolvimento Sustentável do Pólo Pole Sustainable Development Plan
PES	Programa de Pagamento por Serviços Ambientais Programme for Environmental Services Payment
PGAI	Plano de Gerenciamento Ambiental Integrado Integrated Environmental Management Plan
PIN	Programa de Integração Nacional National Integration Programme
PMD	Plano Municipal de Desenvolvimento Rural Development Plan
PND	Plano Nacional de Desenvolvimento National Development Plan
PPA	Plano Plurianual Multi-Annual Investment Plan
PPG-7	Programa Piloto para a Proteção das Florestas Tropicais do Brasil Pilot Programme for the Protection of the Brazilian Rain Forest

PROAMBIENTE	Programa de Desenvolvimento Socioambiental da Produção Familiar Rural Socio-Environmental Development Programme for Rural Family-Based Production
PRONAF	Programa Nacional de Fortalecimento da Agricultura Familiar National Support Programme for Family-Based Agriculture
PROREND	Projeto de Apoio aos Pequenos Produtores no Estado do Pará Support Project for Small-Scale Rural Producers in the State of Pará
PROTERRA	Programa de Redistribuição de Terra Land Distribution Programme
PT	Partido dos Trabalhadores Workers' Party
PU	Plano de Utilização da Unidade de Produção Land Use Plan
RADAM	Projeto Radar na Amazônia Radar in Amazonia Project
RESEX	Reserva Extrativista de Marinha Marine Reserve of Extraction of Natural Vegetation
RGP	Departamento Geral da Pesca General Fishing Department
SAE	Secretaria de Assuntos Estratégicos Secretariat for Strategic Affairs
SAF	Secretaria da Agricultura Familiar Secretariat for Family-Based Agriculture
SAGRI	Secretaria Executiva de Estado de Agricultura Regional Executive Secretariat for Agriculture
SDS	Secretaria de Desenvolvimento Sustentavel Secretariat for Sustainable Development
SEBRAE	Serviço Brasileiro de Apoio a Pequena e Média Empresa Brazilian Institute for Supporting Small and Medium Enterprises
STRs	Sindicatos dos Trabalhadores Rurais Rural Workers' Unions
SUDAM	Superintendência do Desenvolvimento da Amazônia Superintendence for Amazonia Development

UC	Unidades de Conservação Conservation Units
UFP	Unidade Familiar de Produção Unit of Family Production
UN	Nações Unidas United Nations
UNAMA	Universidade da Amazônia University of Amazonia
UNCED	Conferencia Mundial das Nações Unidas sobre Desenvolvimento e Meio Ambiente United Nation's Conference on the Environment and Development
UNDP	Programa de Desenvolvimento das Nações Unidas United Nations Development Programme
ZEE	Zoneamento Econômico Ecológico Economic and Ecologic Zoning

GLOSSARY

Açaí	A palm fruit (<i>Euterpe oleracea</i>) of commercial and consumption value for families. Açaí is the basic family meal that is included with grilled fish or dried beef served over manioc flour.
Área em repouso	The cycles of slashing, burning and cleaning are part of the production system. After the harvest period at the end of the cycle, the area is left fallow for a new production cycle.
Benzedeiros	Catholic blessers.
Boto	Freshwater dolphin.
Caboclo	Rural people of mixed Indigenous-African-Portuguese backgrounds.
Casa de farinha	A small house built in the family yard to produce cassava flour and other products linked to it.
Círio	Religious meeting of the Catholic Church to celebrate local saint's anniversary.
Cobra grande	Legend. A boa constrictor that is too large to live on land, forcing it to live in rivers.
Curandeiro	A person who uses traditional medical knowledge and practice in case of illness.
Curupira	Legend. Small black animal, humanlike in form, but with its feet pointing backwards, that lures people to the forest to kill them.
Extrativista	Member of the rural population who works on extraction and/or collection of uncultivated natural products.
Farinha	Manioc flour. It is the end result of a family's manioc cultivation.
Igarapé	A stream. Generally, it is used by families in daily activities such as showering, drinking water and for leisure.
Mata	Jungle area that has not been used for production.

Município	The lowest political-administrative level of the Brazilian government structure with its own local government and legislative bodies.
Pajés	Individuals with shamanistic powers, inherited from the Amerindian tradition.
Parteiras	Midwives
Pólo	Definition of an imaginary bordered territory that differs from the political territorial division of a <i>município</i> . The <i>ProAmbiente</i> works with a definition of a pole as involving three or more <i>municípios</i> . Each pole was planned to cover from 250 to 500 families, according to each specific feature of the pole.
Quilombo	Closed community of descendants of former slaves who have preserved their cultural identity.
Várzea	Land near the river subject to flooding.
Ramal	Narrow path enabling those in the forest to access the town, neighbours, crops or other areas.
Rios	Rivers connected with oceans and bays.
Roça	Cultivation area to produce manioc, rice, corn throughout the year.
Unidade Familiar de Produção (UFP)	The model of production formed by various sub-systems of production which demonstrates the type of production and life style of rural communities. The UFP is used both to produce for market and to produce for family consumption.

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Chapter One

Introduction

Aim and Research Questions

This thesis is about public policy and the process of scaling up and scaling down grassroots demands through a state-sponsored development programme. The thesis seeks to show how demands from grassroots level have scaled up to public policy, changed and then scaled down to the local communities. In addition, this thesis focuses on participation, the need to identify local-level priorities in development policy and the role of NGOs in development policy.

The thesis examines the interaction between the federal government in Brazil and Amazonian rural communities in the implementation of a state-sponsored socio-environmental development programme at community level called the *ProAmbiente* (Socio-Environmental Development Programme for Rural Family-based Production). The study explains the ways in which local communities are linked with the programme actions and approaches for participatory development. In the context of this thesis, scaling up is understood as a process of incorporation and prioritisation of grassroots demand in this state-sponsored development programme and its subsequent use in public policy. Scaling down is the process of change in public policy and state-sponsored development programme aims, resulting in practical actions at local level that respond to grassroots demands and expectations.

Initiatives around public participation and community involvement to incorporate grassroots demand have become increasingly central to Brazilian government policy programmes since 2002. This can be seen as part of a wider international policy

climate of participatory governance, in both state programmes and development projects (Cooke and Kothari, 2001; Hickey and Mohan, 2004). Within Brazil certain initiatives have been created to develop such engagement, from representation on decision-making bodies, the convening of public meetings, consultations and forums, to more direct volunteer involvement in particular programmes as a way to increase public participation and to scale up demands.

The research deals with the socio-political context that influenced the creation of the *ProAmbiente* in Brazilian Amazonia; the route of identification, incorporation and changes of rural communities' priorities within the *ProAmbiente*; the impacts of the *ProAmbiente* actions on rural communities. The thesis examines the key features of the *ProAmbiente* in creating interaction between public policy, civil society and local communities. The thesis also examines the role played by NGOs as intermediary organisations to promote interaction between the programme and local communities. The thesis looks at how NGOs behave in different contexts and how their behaviour affects *ProAmbiente* implementation.

The thesis argues that the complex interaction between the programme, policy of development and local people emerges as a new challenge in the participatory policy model. It is a complex task to fill the gaps opened up for participation through the engagement of people in policy issues. A great deal of the framework presented is to understand how a macro-level programme changes to the local-level to result in a positive impact on community development. The impact of the *ProAmbiente* on local communities is focused on a framework that interconnects the different levels of action and also under a framework that incorporates knowledge, culture and power as

important elements to be considered in the political space. These interconnected issues are central to this thesis.

The central question is: How does a state-sponsored development programme – using a popular participation approach, carried out by federal government, and intermediated by NGOs – interact with, and impact on local communities? This research question will focus on other questions that are intrinsically linked in this investigation:

1. Have the type of interactions established by government created a public space of action that enables access to the priorities of rural communities? If so, how have these priorities been put into practice?
2. How does a macro-level programme move towards change and scales down to the local-level to focus on local peoples' livelihoods?
3. Do state-sponsored programmes take into account communities' knowledge and culture to establish their aims? If so, how are they incorporated into the policy space?

***The ProAmbiente* – Thesis Case Study**

The *ProAmbiente* was chosen as the case study for this thesis because it is an attempt by the federal government to use participatory approaches to incorporate rural communities' demands, culture and knowledge into a development programme in Brazilian Amazonia. This programme tries to promote “productive conservation” in the Brazilian Amazon, paying small producers to conserve natural resources such as forests and streams.

The aim of the *ProAmbiente* is to set up a multi-functional model of development that links economic growth, social inclusion and environmental conservation (MMA, 2005a) in rural communities. The core objective of the *ProAmbiente* is to support family-based, rural producers to convert the traditional 'slash and burn' agricultural practices that currently prevail in Amazonia into more diversified and sustainable agricultural and extractive practices (more details about the *ProAmbiente* are to be found in Chapter Three).

The *ProAmbiente* model uses poles (a set of *municípios*; a better definition of pole is provided in Chapter Three), *municípios* and rural communities. Due to the scale and complexity of the *ProAmbiente*, two poles were selected for the field work research: The pole of Marajó and the pole of Rio Capim. Both are located in Pará State and have the distinct social, cultural and environmental characteristics that demonstrate the diversity of Brazilian Amazonia (the reasons for choosing Pará and the poles of Marajó and Rio Capim are explained in Chapter Four).

These two areas are in different stages of *ProAmbiente* action. In the pole of Rio Capim, the *ProAmbiente* is in an advanced phase of implementation of policy actions. In a different way, the pole of Marajó is in a planning phase (see more details in Chapter Three). Areas within the different phases had the option to examine the process of incorporation of rural knowledge and culture, and the process of taking these issues into account. The objective was to examine the problems faced by the *ProAmbiente*'s managers to carry out programme actions at local level and taking account of local rural knowledge and culture.

Hypothesis

The central hypothesis of this thesis is that once a state-sponsored programme interacts with local communities through the participation approach, it acknowledges local people's demands. However, when local people's demands scale up to public policy, the programme changes local people's proposals and scales down taking actions that prioritise state interests rather than local people's proposals. In the case of the *ProAmbiente*, the state establishes actions that prioritise environment conservation rather than the productive conservation approach. Although the state acknowledges the importance of local people's culture and knowledge, in practice these issues are not a priority in its programme actions. If local people's culture and knowledge are not taken as a priority, the state exerts its power by carrying out its own way of development. This means that the state impacts rural communities on their culture of production and on their methods of dealing with the environment.

Methods of Analysis

This thesis attempts to link three different levels of the programme: the macro (federal government, and to some extent international donors), intermediate (NGOs) and local (community) levels. The macro-level policy refers to the identification of positions and strategies for policy change. The assessment of the macro-level brings the debate to *ProAmbiente* concepts, models and structures, and also discusses the engagement of the civil society on policy change. It also gives access to factors that influence the building of a political space of interaction that makes it possible to access people at local level.

The intermediary level looks more closely at how organisations such as NGOs interact in diverse levels of contexts, and how its links and/or background have influenced its connections with policy implementation and local people. The intermediary level of practice refers to the process of policies in specific activities and actions, using resources available. The focus on NGOs is identified as a result of the dynamic social movement in assuming the intermediary role between the governmental programme and local community. The intermediary level brings into focus an interface between policy and people's actions. The experiences of different actors, and collective representations existing around the policy, interact and interfere with policy objectives.

The local level centres attention on the community beneficiaries of the *ProAmbiente*. The local level incorporates the dynamics of the relationship between development agencies, individuals, community leaders and other actors within local spaces. It is argued that this level is where the theory and practice related to the policy development and organisational practices have a dynamic interaction and impact on local people's knowledge.

However, there is a direct relationship between macro-, intermediary- and local-levels although they are based upon different assessment criteria. Macro categorisation is based on various aspects of policy actions that have affected local level, such as national policies on rural development, and national and regional rural social movements. It is also based on international mechanisms for changes on environment policy. Although these categorisations are examined separately, they are inherently correlated. The distinction regarding all these levels in development studies provides an explanation for why the research questions and design have been

elaborated in a somewhat more complex way than might normally be expected. However, identifying a question that works on these levels simultaneously allows the possibility of understanding how different links are interconnected and constructed, having a positive impact at the local level. It requires examination of the different processes that are constructed and articulated throughout a long-term relationship that consists of both internal negotiation and identification of interests.

Contribution of the Thesis

This thesis contributes to the current body of knowledge as follows: (i) identification of the trajectory of the peasant social movement as a significant background to understand the *ProAmbiente* model; (ii) recognition of the social network as an important mechanism to exert pressure on government to support local people's knowledge and cultural identity; (iii) identification of the strategies to reverse predominantly top-down policies through the encouragement of people's participation in a governmental programme; (iv) identification of the construction of a new space of policy action through the interaction of government, NGOs and the local community.

The *ProAmbiente* brings with it the idea of community as a space for policy actions and the use of natural resources management. The political space that government created through the *ProAmbiente*'s actions has served as an institutional conduit for the inclusion of local people. The introduction of participatory approaches to produce knowledge from local people's point of view is important because there is a tendency in much of the public policy in Amazonia to neglect its diversity in terms of ecosystems and local people's knowledge.

The influence of grassroots projects on changes at government level is a result of the struggles of rural workers for land reform and access to credit from the 1970s to the 1990s. Their demands were supported by civil society in 2000 in the agenda of the social demonstration '*Grito da Amazonia 2000*' (Amazonia Scream 2000 - see Chapter Four) and were effectively incorporated in political priorities in 2003 when the left-wing *Partido dos Trabalhadores – PT* (Workers Party) were elected to federal government.

The current federal government (2003 – 2010)¹ used the *ProAmbiente* proposal and has transformed the programme into public policy with financial incentives through which 'payment for environmental services' (see Chapter Four) links natural resources management by local communities to change the use and exploitation of natural resources. Family-based and small-scale producers engage in conservation activities including the cultivation of permanent tree crops and reforestation. They receive subsidized loans and compensation payments through the 'environmental service fund'. As the evolution of credit forms show, there are changes in the use of fiscal mechanisms within Brazil; firstly to aid family-based and small-scale producers and secondly to internalise productive conservation as a way to achieve sustainable development and sustainable livelihoods. Such changes, however, are not the exclusive proposals of the federal government; rather they are outcomes of the proposals of the rural social movement that defends the desires and needs of the local rural population.

This study shows that social and political practices used by marginalized groups for influencing decision making are crucial for understanding the conditions for poverty

¹ The current Brazilian President Lula da Silva was re-elected for a second term (2007 – 2010).

reduction. The circumstances for the inclusion of specific groups of the poor into government policy is still a challenge. For example, it is still important to explore the ways poor people engage with the state and government policy in order to develop a pro-poor development trajectory. This study agrees with Webster (2002) and Bowyer (2003, 2005) in demonstrating that the introduction of institutional innovations for greater popular participation is not in itself sufficient to secure a process of public policy formulation or implementation that serves the interest of the poor. In spite of new public spaces having been created from interaction between local civic actors and government, this is undermined by the disarticulation with the political and cultural circumstances under which social interaction takes place.

The case study explored in this thesis contributes to the debate towards transforming political culture to reverse top-down policies. This thesis corroborates with recent statements by Barth (2006) that changes in political culture are reflected in the increasing awareness and pressures for more transparency and accountability of public actions, and improved qualification of civil society to discuss policy issues. This thesis shows that changes of political culture have contributed to changing attitudes of public sector managers towards the importance of people's knowledge and contributions.

In the Brazilian Amazonia context in particular, local people have created spaces for interaction with other members and organisations of their locality to determine the level of participation in development programmes implementation. In the last two decades such spaces have used intermediaries in the form of the NGOs that work with poverty reduction and these have been useful in understanding rural people's priorities and to organise their demands based on culture, knowledge and needs. The

focus on the role of intermediary organisations can be best used in the fight against poverty and can also help reach the poor and to identify the ways in which the poor influence policy. Thus, another contribution of this thesis is to put into the debate the idea of political space, which in the Brazilian Amazonia is the result of a long path towards the inclusion of local people (this issue is explored in Chapters Three and Five).

In spite of its complexity, this study points out that the *ProAmbiente* has been a positive experience in Amazonia in its reversal of top-down policies to focus on local communities. The challenge has been to identify the strategies of the *ProAmbiente* as a governmental programme to impact on areas of diverse cultural identity formed by traditional peasants with the mixed ancestry of Amerindians, European colonisers and African slaves. It is a challenge since the space of interaction is constructed and reconstructed through an intensity of interactions and also has a tendency to take local political action.

Finally, the main issue of the thesis is that the *ProAmbiente* is a significant and positive achievement, in that it responds to some of the demands of the Amazonia's rural poor. However, it is argued that the programme still neglects the most pressing problems, including lack of access to land and land titles. In this thesis, analysis of the interactions of development approaches with local people's systems of knowledge, socio-cultural organisations and management programmes has provided great insights into power relations. This study identified that the sets of power relations between government development policies and community development are a new challenge in the analysis of how governments scale down to empower people at local (community) level.

Organisation of the Thesis

This thesis is divided into eight chapters. Following the introduction, Chapter Two takes a critical look at concepts of knowledge, power, culture and community to define the theoretical framework of the research and to support the analyses of the *ProAmbiente's* impact on local communities. The second chapter presents a central argument that these concepts are fundamental in examining the key features of rural development programmes in implementing policies for community development.

Chapter Three focuses on the context in which the *ProAmbiente* has been carried out. The main issues of Chapter Three are to point out the *ProAmbiente's* objectives, proposals, models and structure. It also provides the background to the *ProAmbiente* model.

Chapter Four looks to the research methods used, the justification for their use, and the criteria for the selection of the study area and communities. It identifies some methodological and practical limitations and details on procedures.

Chapter Five deals with the macro-level analysis and focuses on the *ProAmbiente's* background and its roots – scaling up from a grassroots projects to a governmental programme and then scaling down from the government programme to project implementation. The procedures adopted by the Brazilian government between 2003 and 2006 are taken into account in Chapter Five, as are the efforts made by the Brazilian government to establish links with environmental interests.

Chapter Six examines the space of interaction between the *ProAmbiente* (macro level) and the NGOs (intermediary level). The roles of two NGOs are examined in order to identify the strategies that they use and the nature of the Brazilian government's practices in implementing the *ProAmbiente* in local communities.

Chapter Seven examines the local level. It centres attention on the interactions between the *ProAmbiente* (via the intermediary NGOs) and the rural communities involved in the programme implementation. It looks in much greater depth at the impacts of the *ProAmbiente* actions on the communities and their resources of culture and knowledge are also examined in the local-level analysis.

The final chapter demonstrates the main insights arising from this thesis. In the conclusion, it is argued that the long-term relationship constructed through the rural social movement, left-wing parties, and grassroots' organisations in Amazonia, was a significant factor in formulating a proposal to support small-scale, rural workers. The findings from this research show that participatory approaches have been carried out to access local people's knowledge and cultural identity. However, the controlled sequence of strategies and the rush to complete the series of *ProAmbiente* activities have hindered the success of the programme.

Chapter Two

Theoretical Framework of Analysis: Knowledge, Culture and Power in Policy Development

Introduction

The goal of this chapter is to put forward the theoretical framework of research adopted to examine how programme development acts at local level. Local in this text is conceived as the space where various kinds of knowledge interact and are mediated by developing policy through participatory approaches. The theoretical framework involves three key concepts, namely knowledge, power and culture. Knowledge, culture and power have been part of social development debates for decades however the question is how these core concepts have been incorporated into the development debate at local level. It implies that the sets of power relations between development government policies and community development are a new challenge in the analysis of how government empowers people and makes them more effective at meeting their development needs (Uphoff et al., 1998: 64).

This chapter is organised into two sections. The first section examines the concepts of knowledge, power and culture. The second section explores the debate of development programmes from a participatory approach. The challenges and dilemmas in focusing on people's knowledge and priorities at local level are also investigated in the second section.

Section One: Knowledge, Power and Culture

Knowledge

Knowledge, viewed from a social construction approach² emphasises that individuals and collective groups are continually constructing and reinventing their understanding of themselves and the world around them (Jacobs, 2002). Individuals are socialised into a system of beliefs, norms of behaviour and institutions. Reality³ is constructed through human activity as a product of socialisation (Long, 1992; Jacobs, 2002; Kukla, 2000). Members of a society invent together the properties of the world (Kukla, 2000) and their life experience through the socialisation process. The term social construction means that reality is built from a set of ideas through which a system of practices is implemented. As was argued by Long (1992), all societies implement different life styles, culture forms and rationalities which members utilize in their search for order and meaning, and which they themselves play a part in affirming or restructuring (1992: 25). A focus on micro-level research brings an awareness of which forms of participation work in specific spaces to provide people with the opportunity to realise inclusive, active citizenship (Cornwall, 2002; Gaventa, 2004).

² The foundation of constructivism includes the work of Jean Piaget (1955) and Lev Vygotsky (1978). Piaget's idea of constructivism was based on his view of the psychological development of children's thinking using logical reasoning. Constructivism theory developed by Vygotsky states that children learn concepts from their everyday notions and from adult concepts through interaction with teachers and their contextual settings.

³ Berger and Luckmann (1966) influenced the analysis of the term social construction when they argued that everything we know is in fact the product of socialisation and the consistent reinforcement of the learned definitions of reality.

The influence of the social constructivist's view of knowledge implies that knowledge is a human product, and that it is socially and culturally constructed (Kothari, 2001: 148). It points to the notion that individuals create meaning through their interactions with each other and with the environment they live in. However, it does not take place only from the perspective of an individual (Long, 1992; Mutebi, 2004). As Long (1992) argued, however, the individual is transmuted metaphorically into the social actor, which signifies the fact that the social actor⁴ is a social construction rather than simply a synonym for the individual or a member of *Homo sapiens* (1992: 25). Social constructivism emphasizes the importance of the knowledge, beliefs, and skills that individuals bring to the experience of learning (Ellen, 2002; Bouwen and Taillieu, 2004). Reality can be also learned collectively leading to an increased capacity to manage change. There is a certain skill involved in the ability to analyse the learner's previous knowledge as a way of enhancing the learning of new knowledge (Mutebi, 2004; Bouwen and Taillieu, 2004). For example, Ellen (2002: 242) argues that local populations engage in new knowledge (including scientific knowledge), sometimes transforming it in remarkable ways. Such a process is sometimes described as hybridisation, blending, etc., though defining what this might mean in formal and cognitive terms has proved elusive, partly because we cannot specify the 'units' or 'process' that are hybridising, and because recombination are intrinsic to all knowledge (op. cit., 243)

The interests of social construction have led to actual debate between those who place more prominence on knowledge in development. The understanding of knowledge as a social construction contrasts with the rational, positivist view of

⁴ See Long (1992: 25) about the distinction of two different kinds of social construction associated with the concept of social actor: (1) culturally endogenous in that it is based upon the kinds of representations and characteristics of culture in which the social actor is embedded; (2) that which arises from the researchers' own categories and theoretical orientation.

knowledge derived from a western scientific viewpoint. As Kothari (2001) argues knowledge is produced and is continually reformulated as a powerful normative construct (2001: 141). It implies that knowledge is an accumulation of social norms, rituals and practices that, far from being constructed in isolation from power relations is embedded in them or against them (op. cit., 149).

Bouwen and Taillieu (2004: 146) argue, that from a social constructionist point of view, knowledge discourse is moving towards regarding 'knowledge as participation'. Knowledge creation, knowledge development and knowledge sharing are considered in this perspective as essentially relational processes, whereby people create knowledge by engaging in forms of participation in a community of practice (op. cit., 147). Knowledge sharing in natural resource projects is always situated in a context of practitioners, who enact this knowledge in their activities and their interactions. Following this dominant view of knowledge, a professional, a scientist or a manager is learning by participating in, creating and recreating continuously a particular community of practice.

Scientific knowledge is established as subject to essential changes in approach or paradigm shifts (Kuhn, 1972: 43). Scientific knowledge has at times been described as universal, objective, testable, and verifiable. Methodologies are designed to be rigorous and the scientific community 'knows' the difference between good quality and bad quality science. However, the very nature of paradigm shifts acknowledges that scientific 'truth' is not universal (Kuhn, 1972: 87).

From the modern western science perspective, scientists have historically maintained a dualistic relationship with nature in which detached observers gather empirical

evidence to support theories about the natural world (Nygren, 1999; Bowers, 2001). Western science, in the positivist tradition, is considered nonbiased, objective and disconnected with human or spiritual values (Bowers, 2001; Schonhuth, 2002; Stringer and Reed, 2006). Bowers (1997, 2001) explains how western science, emerging from the enlightenment, is considered as high-status knowledge and maintains a human perspective of nature in which the individual, rather than the community, is the basic social unit (Stringer and Reed, 2006: 12). It means that western scientists avoid indigenous cultural traditions that obstruct 'progress' and embrace change as being inherently progressive in nature (Bowers, 2001). The dualistic form of western consciousness contributes to the disassociation between humans and the environment. The cultural implications of this stance include the fact that western peoples are typically more detached from food resources, and other resources that nature provides (Mahiri, 1998; Bowers, 2001). In this way, development and knowledge are categories imposed by a western discourse to discipline and transform local realities (Schonhuth, 2002: 140). Economies are shaped on the foundation of information, learning and adaptation, and not only with the accumulation of physical capital (Purcell and Onjoro, 2002; Cleveland and Soleri, 2002). This involves shaping and adapting the systems to a given context, cultivating local learning processes, and institutionalising routines of use that persist over time. However, one of the requirements for the sustainability of technological projects in developing countries is that local knowledge is valued, sustained, and integrated in the process of implementation of new technologies (Schonhuth, 2002; Cleveland and Soleri, 2002).

In contrast to modern western science, the term 'traditional ecological knowledge' adopts a more holistic framework as humans are viewed as intricately and spiritually

interconnected with nature (Cleveland and Soleri, 2002; Posey, 2000). For Posey (2000), over the past twenty years, indigenous peoples – together with their languages, cultures and knowledge systems – have become the focus of increasing international attention. This is the result of growing interest in the use of traditional knowledge held by local communities for the utilization of flora and fauna and in genetic resources, such as agricultural landraces and medicinal plants, held by indigenous peoples (2000: 35). Rooted in local culture, Purcell and Onjoro (2002) explain how traditional knowledge is a source of community cohesion, a framework that explains the origins of things, and provides the basis for preserving fertility, controlling pests, and conserving biological diversity and genetic variability. It is based on the idea that as indigenous people are directly dependent on the resources that nature provides for survival through sustenance living, they have a knowledge that is part of their experience (Cleveland and Soleri, 2002: 206). Kalland argues that although local people are recognized to have practised conservation consciously, their perceptions of nature have not operated to prevent pollution, or the destruction of natural resources (2000: 329). The author states that it is simplistic to assume that values and norms work directly on individuals, or acquire environmental actions as a corroboration of specific values. When people have not destroyed nature this may have been the result of low population density compared to the resources and technologies available, rather than to consciously conserve resources (op. cit., 330).

The positivist tradition of western science⁵ is disengaged from human interests and values (Cobern and Loving, 2001; Bowers, 2001). On one hand there has been a disintegration of traditional values and forms of representation yet there has also

⁵ See William W. Cobern and Cathleen C. Loving (2001), who focus on the standard account of science's historic origins in ancient Greek and European culture and natural philosophy.

been a progressive integration into the dominant culture of a scientific mentality and its values, knowledge content and patterns of action (Schonhuth, 2002: 140).

The notion of objectivity within western social and natural science implies that the researcher or rural technician agent is merely an instrument, a conduit for information, rather than an interpreter and actor (Cornwall et al., 1993: 8). In this notion, knowledge is often treated methodologically as if it could be built or destroyed, supplemented or supplanted (op. cit., 8). Bowers (2001) argues that a conventional approach based on knowledge as a commodity is limited in perceiving and responding to local people's concerns. Even though the majority of surveys aim to supply information for specialists to construct their own accounts of what people do, the surveys fail to identify with people's own accounts of their knowledge and practices (2001: 18). The critical point is that conventional experimental design prioritises technical procedures rather than the complex dynamics of interaction between local people (Cornwall et al., 1993; Bowers, 2001). This can obscure the complex interactions that occur in changing social, economic and ecological environments.

Moreover, the social constructionist approach does not take into account the relationship between knowledge production and types of discourse (Giddens, 1990 Sillitoe, 2002b). Authors like Beck and Giddens bring their attention to the dangers of a technocratic society and the exclusion of local communities. In the early 1990s, Giddens⁶ (1990) and Beck (1992) argued that we are moving towards a period of

⁶ Giddens (1990) argues that there are three major driving forces behind the concept of the development: (1) the disconnection between time and space; (2) the 'disembeddedness' of social institutions; (3) the reflexive appropriation of knowledge. He says that the result is an increasing 'disembeddedness' of society; the individual experiences an increasing amount of social context and social logics, altering the knowledge of the individual, thereby affecting individual practices (1990: 54).

reflexive modernity, where modernity is becoming preoccupied with the struggle shaped by modernization itself. The second phase of modernity is marked by increasing awareness of risk, which is becoming a concern for the citizens and the base for political activity and mobilization. Risks are no longer limited in time and space; their consequences are very often global, and they extend to future generations (Giddens, 1990; Beck, 1992). As such, Sillitoe (2002b: 110) argues: "...we are not all the same, although the current trend towards a global culture is eroding the distinctions between different culturally- specific knowledge systems". This leads to a situation where recognition of current risks is based not on direct experience, but on institutionalised knowledge derived from expert assessment and administrative criteria, which tends to be invisible and abstract (Beck, 1992). Both Beck and Giddens perceive increasing individualization as a central aspect of modern society, and they attribute this to a new and more active political aspect. However, they have different positions. Beck centres attention on the environmental risks, while Giddens makes a more comprehensive analysis of the institutional dynamics behind the developments.

The development sector is beginning to recognise knowledge as a pillar of equitable and sustainable development and to view knowledge sharing as one of the central challenges for development practice (Kalland, 2000; Velden, 2002; Stringer and Reed, 2006). The problem is that these practices are still based on an appraisal of corporate experiences with knowledge management. As Stringer and Reed (2006) argue, the incorporation of integrated knowledge into national policy requires much effort to institutionalise assessment methodologies and scientific techniques rather than to provide an accurate diagnosis or solution (2006: 1). For example, Kalland (2000) argues that there is much to learn from local environmental knowledge.

However, there is not enough to secure a sustainable utilization of natural resources. It is necessary to formulate management regimes, which are based on local knowledge at the empirical and institutional level, while at the same time not ignoring the possible input from science (op. cit., 330). Knowledge management is about improving knowledge sharing within an organisation in order to construct new knowledge that enables the organisation to learn and innovate (Gredler, 1997; Kalland, 2000).

Learning as a social process strengthens the discussion of knowledge. It is the acquisition of knowledge through reflection, understanding and practice (Velden, 2002: 29). Here, learning is based on the premise that engagement in social practice is the fundamental process by which people learn to become who they are. The debate on learning is to bring new knowledge⁷ to the organisation to enable people to create better results for change (Ellen, 2002; Velden, 2002). The problem is that development agencies have adopted approaches from the northern corporate sector and these approaches are inappropriate. This inappropriateness is identified by reason that these approaches see knowledge as a rootless commodity and information communication technology as a key knowledge tool (Velden, 2002: 1). The assumption that knowledge can be transformed into a commodity has entered the knowledge debate in the development sector. For example, Ellen (2002) demonstrates that knowledge is also linked with equity where a particular form of knowledge is favoured over others and to convey a further position. Similar impasses occur through commodities, whether preferences are exercised through the market, legal processes, or both (op. cit., 243).

⁷ See Velden (2002) for more on analysis of knowledge management (KM) for development, the organizational management tool developed in the 1990s to manage private sector organisations in the industrialized north.

However, as the knowledge management discourse and methodologies expand to include the international development sector, significant problems of adaptation arise (Mahiri, 1998: 2). In the *World Development Report: Knowledge for Development 1998/1999*, the World Bank outlines its role as a knowledge broker, transferring knowledge from where it is available to the place where it is needed (World Bank, 1998). As critics have pointed out, this approach draws from the knowledge-centred ideas outlined above and perceives knowledge application as an objective and linear process (Mahiri, 1998; Velden, 2002). As Sillitoe (2002a: 1) argues, development agencies have been casting around for several years with mounting evidence of resources wasted in ill-conceived, frequently centrally-imposed schemes that have not only failed to matter in less developed countries but which have also made things worse. The World Bank's approach to knowledge obscures the plurality of alternative and legitimate knowledge (World Bank, 1998; Mahiri, 1998). It is the ways in which people use information and integrate it into their knowledge that is more a function of people's capacities, opportunity, education, experiences, values and intuition, than the information that reaches them (Velden, 2002: 6). If policy makers and managers wish to deal effectively with social problems they have to look at a number of areas: social, cultural, political, economic and environmental (Bauman, 2000a; Delanty, 2003). The critique of the Bank's approach in this case indicates that knowledge needs to be presented in the appropriate context and be meaningful in the local situation in order to be useful and effective. The culture of analysis has provided ways of constructing an interdisciplinary dialogue to be incorporated into policy and public action (Rao and Walton, 2004: 359). Culture has a political dimension, it is only one side of the human condition and of life in which

knowledge of the human reality and the human interest in self-perfection and fulfilment merges into one (Bauman, 2000; Delanty, 2003; Rao and Walton, 2003).

Local Knowledge

In western terms, knowledge is a set of understandings that includes scientific knowledge as something unconnected from indigenous knowledge. The importance of indigenous knowledge about the environment and indigenous resource development reflects the recognition within the development policy community in the 1980s that indigenous knowledge could contribute to an increase in agricultural production and rural welfare (Chambers, 1983; Mahiri, 1998). One dimension of this has been the increasing attention paid to indigenous management in diverse camps of social development (Sillitoe, 2002b; Posey, 2000). The example of incorporation of local people into management positions presented by Chambers (1997b) was an influential approach to contrast with the western understanding of rural people's knowledge. The introduction of participatory approaches reduces the dominance of standardised packages and the top-down models in which positivist and development blueprints are used. Despite incorporating local people's knowledge into programme planning as a significant part of participatory development (Mosse, 2001: 17), it is not enough to change the top-down bureaucracy where the planning system is structured. Kothari (2001: 140) argues that within much participatory development discourse at local level, what is considered as local knowledge is seen as fixed commodities that people intrinsically have and own.

The superiority of scientific knowledge pointed out by Chambers (1997b) is the dominant idea that rural people are 'primitive', 'unscientific' and 'wrong'. This idea

had influenced research and mechanisms used to educate and transform rural people's production and livelihood strategies. Although local knowledge is gaining wide recognition in western social science, is still associated with 'expert' or professional interpretation (Mahiri, 1998: 527). Even with the recognition that local knowledge is innovative and dynamic, the experts play an advisory role in resource management, often putting policy into practice despite a deficiency of applied knowledge (op. cit., 28).

Local people have developed a broad-based knowledge of the environment, knowledge that is an accumulation of practical experience and experimentation (Bebbington and Farrington, 1997: 52). In Kenya, while experts are generally engaged in prototype monoculture and experimental projects, local villagers are more concerned with what can satisfy their needs (Mahiri, 1998: 2). This example demonstrates that although the participatory approach is applied as a comprehensive collaboration between experts and locals, the 'encounters' are too short to permit the evolution of a new relationship. The apparent monopoly of knowledge by 'experts' may then lead to intimidation of local people and an inhibition of the latter's free expression of their knowledge and views in the presence of 'experts' (op. cit., 3). Under such conditions, the discourses of development are produced by those in power and often result in reproducing power relations between areas of the world and certain people (Pottier, 2003: 17).

Different and opposite point of views have been taken through the analysis of local knowledge within the 'development' context. It has been perceived as a major obstacle to development (Milton et al., 1998) a panacea for environmental problems (Inglis and Hughson, 2003), and as a critical component in locally-focused

development (Nygren, 1999). Local knowledge is generally viewed as distinct from scientific or western thinking. Thus, local and scientific knowledge have often been seen in static opposition, two forms of discrete, bounded knowledge (Velden, 2002). However, these static oppositions of local versus universal knowledge have been questioned. Local people do not live in isolation; knowledge develops through experimentation and experience, from working with rural technician officers, or talking to people with different experiences and so forth. There is for that reason, a requirement on behalf of government to establish more diversified models of understanding knowledge at local level (Nygren, 1999). As Velden (2002: 34) argues, the development processes in which knowledge is created, accessed and used, need to acknowledge and incorporate the diversity of both the knower and culture in these processes.

The view of knowledge presented by Cornwall et al. (1993: 4) is that the social networks to which people's knowledge belong interact in many domains, creating complex knowledge chains about issues and innovations. If knowledge is understood as socially constructed, the focus of examination can be on the processes that legitimise certain hierarchies of knowledge and power between local and global (scientific) knowledge (Nygren, 1999). However, the conventional representation of local knowledge as being in opposition to modern knowledge is problematic. It is because it does not allow for the recognition of diversity within different people's knowledge repertoires and inherently privileges one form of knowledge over another. Local communities are changing in the interactions of its members not only amongst each other, but increasingly are evolving rapidly (Craps et al., 2004: 388).

As local knowledge is often seen as location-specific and therefore fixed and rigid rather than fluid and dynamic (Escobar, 1995; Ellen, 2002), less attention has been given to the cross-characteristics of such knowledge and to the idea that local people produce shared knowledge (Nygren, 1999). As is argued by Bauman (2000b: 45), a constructive route is one that attributes more power to local communities, to use local knowledge as the starting point of the analysis. The local is constantly constructed and reconstructed according to the dynamic process of social, economic and policy actions (op. cit., 45-6).

Cultural and knowledge aspects through the practice of political action have become the dominant pattern in development programmes in the last decade (Sillitoe, 2002b; Ellen, 2000). In spite of a range of terms used to refer to local people, it is important to identify when this knowledge is indigenous (Sillitoe, 2002b). As Ellen (2002: 239) argues, indigenous knowledge in a development context may relate to any knowledge held more or less collectively by a population. The distinction between indigenous and scientific, local and global knowledge is defensible and different (Sillitoe, 2002b). However in Sillitoe (2002a: 12), what is made of the differences apparent between scientific-technical and indigenous knowledge depends on one's view of development. Indigenous or local knowledge and modern, scientific knowledge have become increasingly separated in the process of modernisation, and have often been assumed to be fundamentally different (Ellen, 2000; Sillitoe, 2002b).

In sum, the influence of western science as high-status knowledge sustains a human perspective of nature in which the individual, rather than the community is prioritised. In this way, the western scientists avoid indigenous cultural traditions that obstruct 'progress' and embrace change as being inherently progressive in nature. It

brings attention to the idea that production of knowledge in a global world is based on institutionalised knowledge derived from expert assessment and administrative criteria that is involved in a new and more active political sphere. It also obscures those who interact in changing social, economic and ecological environments through complex relations. However, the focus on micro-level research reinserts the term community to refer a specific space that is produced and provides people with the opportunity to develop their active citizenship. Knowledge as a commodity is limited in perceiving and responding to local people's concerns since it has no interest in identifying with people's own accounts of their knowledge and practices (Rao and Walton, 2004: 361-2). However, a model of the social process of transforming commodities into conditions of well-being is a long way on from a catalogue of goods that are universally supposed (Douglas, 2004: 105). A change from a focus on individuals to a recognition that relational and group-based interests shape and influence individuals' aspirations, capabilities, and distribution of power and agency (Rao and Walton, 2004: 359). However, to be aware of local conceptions of well-being, and to incorporate 'common sense' and 'voice', the recipients of public action require to be engaged as central agents in the configuration and implementation of policy. It entails that the theory and practice of development will be more complex and, inevitably, more participatory (op. cit., 361).

The Meaning of Power

Although the term power has involved a deep historical debate, an examination of its meaning reveals a more recent perspective of interpretation in works such as Yon (1999); Kothari (2001); Marsden et al. (1994). Of the various aspects that Foucault has taken into account to debate power, the most significant is the focus on the idea

that power circulates and is everywhere at all levels of society (Foucault, 1980). From this point of view, power can be identified through the creation of norms or customs that are practised throughout society (Kothari, 2001: 141).

The meaning of power as something that circulates at all levels of society is central to any understanding of changes in development discourse. Analysis of power requires shifting the concentration from the national institutions because these macro-spheres of authority are not necessarily the only local conductors of power. Although Foucault (1980) pointed out that power is distributed and manifested in society, it can be understood as an unequal distribution that relies on relations of dominance and subordination. Even though power can be analysed at many different levels, it is manifested in the conflicting interests of different groups (Marsden et al., 1994) within any particular context. This point of view attributes power as an asset owned by the state or a dominant class and is exercised in order to maintain its control and to maintain their authority and legitimacy.

Foucault (1980) focuses on the ways in which these power relations are organised, the forms they take and the techniques they depend upon (1980: 39). Power relations are important to analyse interactions, rather than simply the groups and individuals who dominate or are dominated as a consequence. The meaning of power as presented by Foucault is a shift away from the dichotomous approach. Although a number of oppositions are presented in development discourse such as powerful and powerless, north and south, uppers and lowers (Chambers, 1997a: 72), power is complex and is not necessarily unidirectional. Power as an asymmetrical relation (Scott, 2001: 36) is involved in types of interaction between those who have it and those who do not. There is a given distribution of power within any society, struggles

over the distribution of power involves both winners and losers (Scott, 2001: 43) The opposite analysis can be seen as a “source of error in giving priority to powerful professionals that impose their realities” (Chambers, 1997a: 76) where precise measurements, calculations and standardisation are established. Local people lack confidence in their own ability, and are often persuaded to give the answers that are expected of them, rather than trying to express what they really feel or believe. Effective consultation requires patience, understanding and above all sufficient time to break down the barriers of mistrust. However, they fail to understand people’s own accounts of why they do certain things and what they do by asking them about their knowledge, beliefs and practices (Cornwall et al., 1993: 4). As conventional approaches are inadequate to respond to local people’s concerns, the discourse of scientists are inclined to validate the ‘superiority’ of western science (Cornwall, et al., 1993; Chambers, 1994; Mayoux and Chambers, 2005⁸). Mayoux and Chambers (2005: 273) argue that the emphasis on social impact reverses the paradigm, moving from a focus on ‘proving impact’ to ‘improving practice’.

The new impact assessment agenda of ‘improving practice’ means that simple ‘rigorous’ measurement of before and after situations for random samples with control groups is now rarely sufficient. It requires producing more credible practical recommendations and thinking about how both policy and practical outcomes can be implemented.

The meaning of power from Foucault’s analysis focuses on the importance of exploring local and micro-points of power as global forms of power in the first

⁸ Mayoux and Chambers (2005) argue that participatory approaches, methods and behaviour are essential for the new agendas of pro-poor development and ‘improving practice’, since it moves from impact assessments and also the monitoring and evaluation process to collect information on impacts.

instance are composed of their own particular techniques (Foucault, 1980: 99). The analysis of the direction of change in development introduces power into the equation and explores the relationship between domination at the micro level and evolution of discourse (Scoones and Thompson, 1993; Crook, 2003). Crook (2003: 77) argues that the level of awareness of the poor is determined primarily by the politics of local–central relations. However, in most cases, ‘elite capture’ of local power structures is facilitated by the desire of ruling elites to create and sustain power bases in the countryside (op. cit., 78).

The role of power in the analysis of the links between relations of power and local people opens up a difficult problem of scale - the amount of time and space of issues being studied (Hailey, 2001; Pottier, 2003). For example, Francis (2001) argues that PRA has been seen as a means of validating local knowledge and empowering local population. However, the failure of participatory approaches such as PRA to map alternatives strategies has left their rhetoric vulnerable to the opportunism and co-option to which they inevitably succumbed (op. cit., 85). For Mosse (2001) ‘PRA-type’ information set as a new scientific standard by donor and other agencies does not, in itself, democratise power in programme decision making. Participatory approaches also serve to represent external interests as local needs, dominant interests as community concerns, and so forth (op. cit., 22). Flynn and Kroger (2003: 151) focus on policy learning in contrast to policy transfer. Improving implementation by policy learning is then indirect. Its intention is to encourage unspecified institutional changes, which enables better flexibility. Policy learning implies a focus on participation since the combined informal knowledge of target and interest groups, and environmental non-governmental organisations is assumed to add to the formal expertise of implantation officials (Flynn and Kröger, 2003: 151).

It offers to enhance national administrative implementation capacities, not so much for formal capacities (resources, staff, fiscal and legal powers) but rather in the sense of capacities to understand, adapt, process and manage information (Flynn and Kröger, 2003: 151).

Knowledge as a Component of Power

The critique of the positive view that sees knowledge, as a tangible asset to be extracted and documented is fundamental in acknowledging that knowledge is historically produced through all sorts of social practices (Kothari, 2001: 141). Knowledge processes are embedded in social processes that imply aspects of power, authority and legitimating, which reflect on and contribute to the conflict between social groups, as they are to lead to the establishment of common perceptions and interests (Long 1992: 27). If knowledge is understood as a component of power, its influence can be manifested in interaction situations at local-level development discourse.

The emphasis on the complex dynamics of interaction among social actors in changing social, economic and ecological environments leads to the understanding that knowledge is not something that can be built as a commodity (Bowers, 2001: 18). Knowledge, like power, is not something that is possessed and accumulated (Foucault, 1980; Kothari, 2001). People dynamically interpret, rather than just describe, the outcomes of these interactions within their own frames of reference and according to their own assumptions and priorities (Kothari, 2001; Cleaver, 2001). It means that 'there are many articulations of power through participatory processes and in the wider context within which knowledge is produced or reproduced' (Kothari, 2001: 143). It is important to ask how power affects knowledge (Scoones

and Thompson, 1993: 12). The argument of knowledge as a component of power is a key issue to be taken into account since the criteria of what constitutes knowledge, what is excluded and who is designed as qualified to know involves acts of power (Foucault, 1980). The influence of Foucault (1980) on debates of power and knowledge contribute to an understanding that power is not simply an entity that can be held or taken but also circulates, working through and within various channels and every network of social actions (Kothari, 2001; Mosse, 2001).

Arguments made by Pottier (2003) and Schonhuth (2002) about the nature of knowledge production refer to 'knowledge's interfaces' between local communities - their practices and discourses - and external agents of change who have their own practices. Knowledge production is embedded in social and cultural processes imbued with aspects of power, authority and legitimisation. Even the act of producing knowledge involves social struggle, conflict and negotiation (Pottier, 2003: 19). The term 'interface' as pointed out by Gramming (2002) is understood as the limit of total understanding within the universe produced by the interaction between the 'outsiders' and 'local actors' as they engage in their mutual relationship. However, this relationship involves complex aspects that may become visible in encounters among actors with different practices and identity. Furthermore, the interface situation is not a simple interaction; on the contrary, it is involved in diverse practices with specific interests linked to cultural patterns depending on social, economic and environmental diversity.

This is an understanding of knowledge as part of the power relations that exists between people and organisations and their position in society. It implies that from the understanding of the 'knowledge interface' the role of power has a particular

effect on knowledge encounters between people or groups differently placed in the social hierarchy (Pottier, 2003). Arce and Fisher (2003) point out that the interface situation is the way in which different social actors negotiate their interests in processes of development or economic change. The focus on knowledge as the centre of analysis in practices of negotiation may bring out discrepancies of interest between global institution and local social actors (Pottier, 2003; Arce and Fisher, 2003). This is because the production of 'needs' from local knowledge is shaped both by locally dominant groups and project interests that interact at local level (Mosse, 2001: 18). In spite of all the differences identified by interface analysis, the focus on the existence of the interface itself entails revealing the dynamics of cultural space that makes it possible for the various 'world views' to interact and for the power differentials that takes place between the parties involved (Long and Villarreal, 1996:21).

Although at times 'the interface' was studied and presented as something more than economic reproduction (Giddens, 1991; Long and Villarreal, 1996), this did not permit a break with ideas of social reproduction. In effect, this view did not enable a movement beyond agency into a new theoretical position of looking at a world that is not just based on an idea of individual cognitive will. In this respect, used sensitively the metaphor of the middle ground can help to resituate agency (Arce, 2003) in order to assess the precise way in which social development policies affect the circulation of development issues. Thus, in the middle ground there is an inter-space where policy and social life mix, generating different ways of ordering the world, while providing us with the opportunity to study the circulation of objects across multiple social and political realities (op. cit., 847).

Craps et al. (2004)⁹ identify processes that construct identities, structures and activities that cross the boundaries between communities of expert and indigenous practice, even in the exceptionally unequal conditions of the Andes, where inequalities between these communities are deeply rooted in history. As inequalities tend to be confirmed through interactions, not only inside but also outside the multi-actor initiative, they cannot be resolved definitively by a multi-party project. Under those circumstances a social constructionist approach, bringing attention to the constructed nature of mutual perceptions and relationships, inspired authors-facilitators to keep reflection and dialogue among the participants in the process ongoing (Long and Villarreal, 1996, Mejía, 2004).

While a social constructionist perspective of knowledge may help to clarify differences between communities of practice producing local knowledge on the one hand, and expert knowledge on the other hand, it may also help to adjust this apparent dichotomy (Craps et al., 2004; Mejía, 2004). Craps et al. (2004) argue that the knowledge of local communities is enacted and changed in the interactions of its members not only between each other, but also increasingly with a rapidly evolving environment. Although the inequalities between these communities are deeply rooted in history, the transitions were taken as opportunities to look for common ground between different communities of practice.

⁹ Craps et al. (2004) analyse how the multi-party process constructs identities, work forms, structures and activities in interaction practice between indigenous communities in the Andes.

The question of how similar or different scientific knowledge and indigenous knowledge are, and how they might work together to help solve the problems of 'development', has immense practical and ethnical implications (Cleveland and Soleri, 2002: 206). The suggestion made by Pottier (2003: 18) is that an empirically-grounded understanding of how knowledge is produced through the mediation of unequal power relations and processes of translation is a prerequisite for any serious attempt to investigate dialogue and to enable all stakeholders to benefit from development.

The arguments presented by Cheater (1999); Yon (1999) show how power is integral to discourse or systems of knowledge, of culture, identity, community and for considering the place of ambivalence in the effects of these discourses. From an ethnographic point of view, Yon (1999) focuses on the dynamics of culture and identity analysis between state policies. If the term identity is central to the discourse of knowledge, alterations in the processes behind the social construction of identity can offer important explanations of alterations in identity patterns. Yon (1999: 17) shows how cultural representations and identity categories may be both enabling and limiting, and also suggests thinking about the ostensibly contradictory possibilities for empowerment and disempowerment (Yon, 1999; Ramos, 1999) to be present at the same time (Yon, 1999).

Habermas (1984) argued that the discourse structures of the socio-cultural life-world are the bases of power. Habermas draws on the ideas of Parsons (1963), as well as Arendt (1978), as it was Parsons who saw power as resting on a framework of communal trust and shared values within a societal community. According to Parsons, power is rooted in the shared values that define the idea of a community.

Communities are seen as structured rather like those values in which individuals have trust or confidence. This meaning of community defines the positions of leadership where occupants are capable with the legitimate right to issue directives and to formulate policy in relation to the values that the members of the community hold in common.

Analysis of the direction of change in development has introduced power into the equation and explores the relationship between the character of domination at micro-level and the evolution of discourse (Scoones and Thompson, 1993: 3). The role of power in the analysis of the links between relations of power and local people opens up a difficult problem of scale, the extent of time and the space of that being studied. This means that those in higher roles, to whom those in lower roles are accountable, have to transform their behaviours, attitudes and roles from the dominators to enablers, from controllers to coaches, and from instructors to facilitators. Only then can reversals of power relations enable upward flows of realistic insights. On the institutional side, this means that procedures, incentives, expectations and organized experience are needed to encourage and support individuals in their trajectories of personal development, learning and change (Mayoux and Chambers, 2005: 273).

The Meaning of Culture

In recent years, academic interest in culture in public action and a range of ideas about the nature of culture has increased (Douglas, 2004; Rao and Walton, 2004; Sen, 2004). In the world of policy, culture is increasingly being viewed as a commonplace, malleable fact of life that matters as much as economics or politics to the process of development (Rao and Walton, 2004:3). Douglas (2004) argues that

development works always to destabilise a fragile balance of social forces. It involves a risk if as Douglas argues it is going to erode the community's accumulated store of trust, and dissolve their traditional readiness to collaborate. In this way the well-being of the community may be worse after development than before (op. cit., 89).

Rao and Walton (2004) point out two extreme views tend to dominate the rhetoric on culture and development. There is the hypermodist perspective that culture matters because societies steeped in traditional cultures are unsuited to market-oriented development fundamentally in growth issues. Culture is viewed as the enemy that inhibits societies from functioning in the modern world. This second modernization viewpoint was formed by economists and has dominated development since the 1950s. As Rao and Walton (2004: 10) argue, dominance is viewed as an aspect of control in western ideologies and interests. It implies that culture is a system of control that creates and expands existing macro inequalities between rich and poor countries, and macro inequalities between westernised and indigenous groups in poor countries (Rao and Walton, 2004: 11).

For Sen (2004), the key issue is to investigate the different and diverse ways in which culture should be taken into account in examining the challenge of development, and in assessing the demands of sound economic strategies (2004: 37). And also how can these influences be better understood, and how might they modify or alter the development policies? In this way, Rao and Walton (2004) recognise that there is a culture of development associated with dominant mainstream economic views in the development discourse, and has had a powerful, and not always positive, effect on the world's poor countries. However, the focus is on how to integrate

notions of culture and economic change to design more effective public action. This point of view is different from that as culture as static which has a simplistic view of the development problem in which culture is treated as an exogenous constraint rather than as one of the realms of everyday life (op. cit., 11). However, culture is not a 'natural' matter that is unchangeable and static (Klamer, 2004: 140); on the contrary, it comprises the patterns of ideas, values, practices, and beliefs common to a particular group of people, or a set of people within a particular society (Inglis and Hugson, 2003; Klamer, 2004).

The existence of dynamics within the cultural space where the notion of relationship among various 'world views' make possible an analysis of the power differences that take place between the parties involved (Long and Villarial, 1996; Pottier, 2003). It is important here to point out the recognition that all societies contain within them a repertoire of different life styles, cultural forms and rationalities which members utilize in their search for order and meaning, and which they themselves play a part in affirming or restructuring. Long (1992) raised a further issue related to the cultural forms. The strategies and cultural constructions employed by individuals do not arise out of the blue but are drawn from a stock of available discourses that are to some degree shared with other individuals, contemporaries and perhaps predecessors (op. cit., 25). As Inglis and Hughson (2003) argue, the most important issue is to understand how these cultural factors contribute towards either the maintenance or the overthrow of the status quo in that society (2003: 3). It means that the incorporation of culture in policy space is not just to understand the relationship between groups or between societies, but also to comprehend what goes on,

especially in terms of wielding power within particular groups and societies (Inglis and Hughson, 2003; Bauman, 2001; Rao and Walton, 2004).

Culture is involved in power relations and reflects acts of producing knowledge (Bauman, 2001; Pottier, 2003; Inglis and Hughson, 2003). However, as Inglis and Hughson (2003) have argued, the key point is to analyse how cultural factors contribute towards changes in society (2003: 3). The nature of changes is complex and challenges the relations between time and space. Bauman (2001) explains changes that are now more disorderly and entangled than in any preceding epoch. It is because things today are moving sideways, aslant or across rather than forward, often backward, but as a rule the movers are unsure of their direction and the nature of successive steps is hotly contested (op. cit., 137). From Bauman's point of view, coexistent life-forms mean that they settle aside each other, clash and mix, and crowd together in the same space/time (Bauman, 2001: 137).

Lash (1999) puts forward a different point of view to define culture. He describes the world of global information culture as "a swirling vortex of microbes, genes, desire, death, semiconductors, holograms, semen, digitised images, electronic money and hyperspaces in a general economy of indifference" (Lash, 1999). He highlights that the world is shifting from a primary epistemological modernity where knowing subjects constructed the objects of knowledge, to a second or reflexive modernity of ontology where objects themselves have become possessed of being. The rise of the global information culture shifts the world again, to somewhere else yet to be configured, but somewhere that sees human singularity decline as these objects begin to think (Bauman, 1998; Lash, 1999). It is the age "of the inhuman, the post-human

and the non-human, of biotechnology and nanotechnology” (Lash, 1999) of an object material culture in which technologies, objects of consumption, lifestyles, come to dominate the cultural landscape and take on the power to constitute, track and judge.

The explanation of the shift from cultural features to rapid changes by Bauman (2001) and Lash (1999) make it clear that the world is facing increasing ranges of complexities under rapid globalisation. For Bauman, the difficulty is to capture the realities of our age, since the defining traits of post-modernity’s coexistent life forms are uncertainty and ambivalence, and permanently unfinished differentiation (Long 1992; Bauman, 2001).

Culture provides for the members of a society a conceptual universe that both frames and constructs patterns of behaviour as mutually constitutive (Berger and Luckmann, 1966; Read, 2003). Culture provides the shared knowledge system that enables members of a society to recognize fellow members and to coordinate their actions with one another (Read, 2003: 32). Society provides the communities with points of views, and thus the patterned interactions and experiences, out of which individuals construct their representations of culture (Berger and Luckmann, 1996; Read, 2003). This constitutive property of culture underscores the reason that theorizing in anthropology has focused on culture as central for understanding the nature of human societies (Read, 2003: 33). Analysis of the kinship basis of the social organization of rural communities reveals the role of kinship in the economic, political and religious organization of rural settlements (Aires, 1992). Aires demonstrates that while religion constitutes a basis for the constitution of community identity, religious practice does not constitute a basis for the formation of a symbolic identity at local level. For example, religion both creates links between *caboclos* and other social

categories which follow the same religion and differentiates between *caboclos* with different religious identities. Aires's work is important to understand that the lack of involvement in a political movement is the reason for the absence of a collective identity among *caboclos* (Aires, 1992:45).

Despite the centrality of culture as an organizing concept, satisfactory theories about the relationship between behaviour and culture has continued to be obscure (Inglis and Hughson, 2003). Consequently, current theories of cultural evolution are incomplete because "no theory of socio-cultural evolution can claim completeness if it is not able to define the generating logic of society and socio-cultural evolution (Read, 2003: 32). Theoretical positions differ on even a basic issue such as whether we understand culture as arising from human behaviour taken as actions in response to an evaluation of conditions and consequences external to the individual or whether behaviour already presupposes culture so that behaviour can be seen as arising from acting out of actions suitable to the cultural identity the individual takes on.

The socio-cultural aspect adds other arguments to explain the meaning of culture. The increased debate from socio-cultural perspectives demonstrates the transforming and complex changes in the world (Gredler, 1997; Read, 2003), 2002). However, the majority of attention has been focused on cross-cultural changes (Gredler, 1997: 23) and on different life-worlds that interact. These authors agree that the increasing interest in diversity is a consequence of the complex transformation encounters of the globalizing world. Globalisation has meant that at the local level, the world's peoples are closer together ensuring that diversity, plurality, hybridism, dislocation and discontinuity have become a recurring theme (Gredler, 1997: 24).

Perlow and Weeks (2002) further investigate the role culture plays in shaping how helping behaviour is framed and when it is performed in a given context. They use groups of Americans and Indians as a point of comparison of national culture and these two cultures form a useful contrast for studies of helping behaviour. The focus on these two cultures is justified for the differences between the general Indian culture with its emphasis on interdependence and mutual aid and the American cultural emphasis on the individual (op. cit.). Through the comparative method, Perlow and Weeks (2002) conclude that American culture is highly individualist whereas Indian culture is more collectivist. Individualistic cultures are characterized as emphasizing the importance of individuals maintaining their independence and differentiating themselves from other people. Collectivist cultures are characterized as emphasizing the importance of interdependence between people and the way in which individual identity is defined by one's relationship to others (Gredler, 1997; Douglas, 2004).

This means that the incorporation of culture in policy space is not just to understand the relationship between groups or between societies, but also to comprehend what goes on, especially in terms of wielding power within particular groups and societies (Inglis and Hughson, 2003). As is demonstrated by Rao and Walton (2004: 3), even though culture assumes a 'commonplace' in policy space, there remains some confusion about how it matters (Rao and Walton 2004: 3). In this thesis, the researcher offers a contribution to the debate by examining how culture is taken into account in the process of development that also involves knowledge and power. The framework towards these three concepts is examined as interconnected, a key element to identify the impact of development programmes on local communities. Although the Brazilian government created a policy to interact with local

communities, the challenge is how to invest in strategies to have a positive impact on people's livelihoods.

Knowledge and Culture

Culture is embodied in the symbols and artefacts of human interaction activities (Berger and Luckmann, 1966; Read, 2003). People are involved in networks that contribute to the circulation of information among groups of people (Abraham and Philippe-Platteau, 2004: 229). From this point of view, culture is embedded in the social process, and reflects acts of producing knowledge (Pottier, 2003). Culture is involved in the notion of relationships attributed to the relations among individuals within groups, among groups that share ideas and perspectives (Rao and Walton, 2004; Sen, 2004).

Knowledge results from interactions between people and their environments and resides within culture (Habermas 1971; Long and Villareal, 1996). However, the construction of knowledge is also influenced by the cultural and historical factors of the community (Weedon, 2004: 23). When the members of the community are aware of their 'intersubjective' meanings, it is easier for them to understand new information and activities that arise in the community. 'Intersubjectivity' relates to a shared understanding among individuals whose interaction is based on common interests and assumptions that form the ground for their communication (Jackson, 1996; Midgley, 2000). 'Intersubjectivity' not only provides the grounds for communication but also supports people to extend their understanding of new information and activities among the group members (Uphoff et al., 1998: 133).

Midgley (2000) develops an argument about the implications of mechanistic versus systemic assumptions about relationships across the three worlds. The three worlds refer conceptually to the (i) subjective, psychological personal world of perceptions, based on interpretation by the senses, lived experience and tacit knowledge; (ii) the objective, external natural world of professional knowledge narratives based on observation; (iii) the social or intersubjective world based on shared meaning that is co-created through dialogue. In the social world, at worst we misunderstand each other completely or at best work harmoniously to co-create meaning. Midgley (2000) uses these three worlds as a starting point for addressing the connection across representation, communication and reality. Each world has implications for policy and practice (management, leadership, research and the way in which problem solving is approached). Jackson (1996) applied the three worlds to develop a meta-level approach to working with management models. He places importance on the links across the areas of knowledge rather than on technical knowledge. This reinforces Habermas's (1971) viewpoint that knowledge connects with three camps: technical, strategic and communicative knowledge (1971). However, the challenge is to work with diversity and to manage it. Uphoff et al. (1998) argue that increasing attention has been devoted to management information systems that handle the large amounts of data and information that programme generate and require. The information can be shared with the process of dissemination producing mutations that can enhance or degrade the information in circulation (op. cit., 135).

Construction of social meanings also involves intersubjectivity among individuals and organisations. Social meanings and knowledge are shaped and evolved through negotiation within the communicating groups (Habermas 1971, Weedon, 2004). Personal meanings shaped through these experiences are affected by the

intersubjectivity of the community to which the people belong (Weedon, 2004: 19). The sense of belonging and connectedness is characterized by the perception of territorial borders, by the recognition of strong historical significance, and by a dimension that is attributed to the place or community. A sense of community is related to belonging and connectedness and this is taken into account in the research of this thesis on social development and local empowerment (see Chapter Seven). Indeed, this sense remains prominent often in the course of conducting research on political action at local level.

Social and Cultural Dimensions of Development

Cultural conditions exert considerable influence upon human behaviours, not only in the social sphere, but also in the economic (Sen, 1999). In spite of many definitions of 'development' that focus on economic aspects, it is fundamental to recognise its social and cultural elements (Sen, 1999; Willis, 2005). This is not just because social and cultural variables affect economic growth, but also that social and cultural norms and expectations need to be considered in their own right (Willis, 2005: 116). As Sen (2004: 43: 4) argues, if development relates to the increase or improvement of living standards through social and economic change, then it will impact on, and be mediated through culture.

The concept of culture has until recently been ignored by development theorists who were eager to escape colonial discourses of culture and the 'culturalist' explanations of modernization which represented culture as a 'barrier' to development (Harris, 1996; Ivanova, 2005). This aversion to addressing culture too often leads development studies (even those preoccupied with institutional arrangements and

incentive structures) to ignore the complexity and diversity of human life. It also neglects the way in which culture is a dimension of all social action, including economic and political life (Sen, 1999, 2004; Rao and Walton, 2004).

The increased occurrence of organizations operating across national boundaries, and the embracing of cultural diversity as a business strategy, represent a variety of recent trends. The convergence of these trends corroborates the membership of groups, becoming more culturally diverse (Ivanova, 2005; Küpçü, 2005). If organizations are to be successful, they need managers to have an awareness of the impact of increasing cultural diversity (Ivanova, 2005; Küpçü, 2005). Despite the importance of this need for organizational success, the current literature has done little to enhance managers' knowledge of how effectiveness might be impacted when cultural diversity modifies or alters local knowledge. Harris (1996: 34) challenges this gap in examining cultural diversity and its impacts on group effectiveness.

If the analysis includes organizational culture, the focus on the context where the interaction occurs is significant because organizations are part of societal structures and sets of meanings (Harris, 1996; Tendler, 1997). Harris (1996: 34) argues that the issues around management, racism, professionalism, class, for example, are meanings embedded in broader structures of social power. However, the interpretations of organizations cannot be simply reduced to those meanings and power structures in broader society as tends to happen. The literature on organizational culture is a helpful corrective to this take on organizations, for analysis of the ways in which meanings are constructed within development organizations. However, such meanings are both stabilized and fragmented over time. It is only through studying practices that one can understand the ways in which

organizations tend towards having a more or less integrative or fragmentary culture shared by staff or it is only through a study of practice that it becomes possible to understand how and why organizations are given the meanings that they are given by people beyond the organization.

The main factor for influential organizational processes is the requirement to act in response to pressures from upwards such as funding agencies and downwards such as community groups. The different structures and capabilities developed by organizations to maintain unity and integrity in response to these tensions are explored and related to differences in the perceived role of the organizations. These tensions are between the bureaucratic structures that initiate and fund development projects and the grassroots organizations that can mobilize participation and resources to implement them (Inglis and Hughson, 2003; Alkire, 2004). Although large-scale development agencies recognize the need for local participation to facilitate project implementation and local organizations recognize the need for centrally-provided resources to support and expand their local activities, the organizational gulf between the two precludes effective interaction.

Tendler's work (1997) is also relevant to understand the influence of culture on development for agencies and for local people. Tendler's study of the sources of effective government in the north-east of Brazil aims at an understanding of how innovation had occurred within several government programmes in Ceará State. It focuses on the actions of bureaucrats and project staff along the chain of project implementation to understand what led officials and staff to act in ways that favoured client orientation, responsiveness and programme effectiveness. Such concerns led to an analysis of explaining the changes in organizational incentives and behaviour that

led to effective programmes. Tandler's analysis focused on specific innovators and individuals who had taken risks within bureaucracies and who had often had the authority to effect change.

The cultural impact of development agencies and interventions – both positive and negative – has been a much-mooted topic within development in recent years (Rao and Walton, 2004: 3). In this respect, culture, knowledge and development interconnect at many intersections that relate to both a means and an end and in a complexity of ways (Sen, 1999; 2004). In any particular domain such as social or economic development, several knowledge systems exist, some of which, consensually through a 'constellation of interests' (Castells, 1997: 12), come to acquire more value than others. They explain the reality better for immediate purposes or they emanate from a stronger power base. An inexorable consequence of the legitimating of one kind of knowledge as authoritative is the devaluation and discharge of other kinds of knowledge. It means that "cultural diagnoses cannot provide universally applicable answers. Culture is part of the story – part of the formation of agency, of effective markets and institutions – but is often left out" (Rao and Walton, 2004: 360).

The devaluation of traditional cultural knowledge systems is a general mechanism by which hierarchical knowledge structures and resulting 'cultures of development' are generated, transmitted, valorised and implemented (Inglis and Hughson, 2003: 26). Rather than viewing culture as an attribute of the societies undergoing development (Schech and Haggis, 2000: 42), the new ways of thinking about culture and development mean examining how development institutions, processes and practices

are caught up in a web of cultural presuppositions, values and meanings (op. cit., 42-3).

The cultural aspect assumes an important role in public actions, mainly in a heterogeneous environment where these pursuits of diversity, of identity and social practices involve local people with their own knowledge and aspirations (Long, 1992; Rao and Walton, 2004). This is a position where culture is not a homogenous and stable attribute (Schech and Haggis, 2000) since it is involved in many aspects. Heterogeneity can also arise from the particular components of culture for instance religion, literature or style of living (Sen, 2004). This is a framework of culture as a component of a set of capabilities that people have – the constraints, technologies, and frame-working strategy that state how decisions are made and co-ordinated across diverse actors (Sen, 1999; Rao and Walton, 2004). Bourdieu (1993: 32) identifies styles/values, preferences/aspirations as cultural issues that are accumulated through a long process of acquisition. In this understanding, cultural capital is a base resource of vital importance in the formation of other forms of resource e.g. natural, human, or social capital, and indeed the long-term sustainability of any human or economic development initiative (Arce, 2003; Kapoor, 2004).

Arce (2003) argues the importance of reversing traditions of the treatment of the social as resulting from economic development (2003: 6). This point of view calls for a new perspective that goes beyond a theoretical identification of social development with the management of resource scarcity. However, with the advent of participatory thinking and empowerment, development is today typically represented as an

outcome of peoples' actions (Arce, 2003). For Sillitoe (2002b), the new third way¹⁰ for the twenty-first century is an action approach, as opposed to a purely academic one. Although the previous approaches were blind to local knowledge, the new emergence of development's interest in indigenous knowledge and practices is seen as new, bottom-up oriented development paradigm (Sillitoe, 2002b: 115).

The expression of action is to understand the rapidly changing world. This shift in representation has contributed to identifying the social as mainly related to techniques of participatory planning and methodologies for consultation and incorporation (Arce, 2003: 7). Such a shift provides scope for planning without actually allowing the social to break free from priorities dictated by the economic management of the scarcity of resources (Arce, 2003: 7). Despite the debate on the understandings that 'the social' can encompass the creativity of people's knowledge and practices since the 1980s (Booth, 2003) the emphasis on people's knowledge is still a challenge. The argument is based on the possibility of challenging existing social, cultural, and political boundaries through the internalisation of a development language such as participation and empowerment within people's everyday life. This process was presented not just as adaptation, but also as a qualitative change into new situations. It created a window for social development that has been incorporated into dominant economic discourse as a representation of the social (Chambers, 1983: 21).

¹⁰ See Sillitoe (2002a) for more details about the two ways of the paradigms that structures development such as (1) the modernisation approach - the classic transfer of a technology paradigm associated with the political right that not only dismisses local knowledge but also views it as part of the problem, being non-scientific, traditional and primitive; (2) the dependency approach based on viewing poor farmers as helpless victims. Local knowledge is again sidelined, this time as the view of the powerless.

Recent studies made by Rao and Walton (2004), emphasises a positive impact by incorporating the cultural aspect into a development context and emphasising the importance of culture on public actions. Culture is seen as having an important role in policy development and is present mainly in heterogeneous environments where pursuits of diversity of identity and social practices involve local people with their own knowledge and aspirations (Sillitoe, 2002b; Schech and Haggis, 2000). However, the focus is on the analysis of how knowledge is produced and the influence of power relations on the production of knowledge.

Section Two: Incorporation of the Participatory Approach into Programme and Policy

The Role of the Participatory Approach in Policy Development Actions

Increasingly, complex and uncertain programme environments mean that objectives and resource allocation needs are not often clear. This is especially the case of mid-programme evaluations, in the form of information and knowledge change, management or stakeholders can make decisions and allocate or re-allocate resources where and when necessary to ensure project sustainability and achieve better results (Kapoor, 2004: 161). However, participatory research methods are unlikely to be good instruments for the analysis of local power relations since they are shaped by the very relations that are being considered (Mosse, 2001; Kothari, 2001).

Participation clarifies and establishes channels of communication and power dynamics (Kapoor, 2004: 161). Several donor documents state that dialogue between stakeholders helps iron out differences and disagreements. This makes channels of communication more clear and controlled, and minimises uncertainty and misinterpretation of evaluation criteria and results.

The participatory approach contributes to reverse top-down planning to focus on people who are considered 'powerless' (Chambers, 1983: 22). However, 'blueprint' planning is still part of the development debate. As Toner and Franks (2006: 84) argue, the activities of projects are carefully planned and structured in advance to allow for meaningful participation. However, this rigid practice is unable to support people in planning their own development (Hulme, 1997; Bowyer, 2005). It means

that if the participatory approaches are not flexible enough to influence people to participate in a project, people will be excluded from expressing their priorities (Bowyer, 2003, 2005).

The failure of 'blueprint' development interventions to carry substantive improvements in poverty reduction has been recognised over the last 30 years. Toner and Franks (2006: 81), for example, demonstrate that successful interventions start with a complex understanding of poverty and individual livelihoods to ensure the central focus on objectives of intervention.

The connotation of participation in development has been positioned in development projects and programmes, as a means to reinforce their sense and sustainability. However, the problem is that participation in projects has been seen not as connected to matter of politics or governance, but as a manner of encouraging action outside the public sphere (Gaventa and Valderrama, 1999: 32).

Laderchi (2001: 15)¹¹ demonstrates that despite a variety of meaning and different proponents of participation, all these aim to implement a large number of development activities. Although there is divergence in some aspects, the main idea is that participation has three broad phases: (1) in the 1970s, participation was seen as strategy for rural development introduced by international donors and development agencies; (2) in the 1980s, the concept of participation was incorporated by NGOs to work at grassroots level as self-reliance and self-help. The importance of NGOs grew from the retraction of state and neo-liberal reforms.

¹¹ See other contributions such as Gaventa and Valderrama (1999), Laderchi (2001), McGee (2002), on the debate of the development of participation.

And, (3) from 1990s participation changed focus, moved beyond the boundaries of project or grassroots intervention to other spheres of social, economic and political life (Gaventa and Valderrama, 1999: 2).

The application of a variety of participatory methodologies reflects the model to promote participation finds. The use of PRA, for example, emphasizes that local people are enabled to make their own appraisals, analysis, and plans (Mutebi, 2004: 290). It involves a series of techniques designed to share knowledge between local people and non-local people used mainly in rural settings for project appraisal and in some cases in project cycles and research studies (op. cit., 291).

Although the negative image of the indigenous is emphasised when it is confronted with western values, knowledge at local level is ever changing and dynamic (Sillitoe, 2002b: 119). Sillitoe argues that research can be a vehicle for the appropriation – not the protection – of indigenous knowledge as a manner for bridging the gap between observer and observed, and making local people active partners in research (2002b: 133). The use of the participatory approach opens up a new possibility for local communities to construct people as active agents in research with a new perception of wider processes of domination, in which both researcher and participants are located and which they are in different ways seeking to change.

In spite of the role of participatory rural appraisals to focus on the significance of local knowledge, PRA also demonstrates the irreconcilable differences between the divergences of needs among those involved in development practices (Laderchi, 2001: 16). It allows for profound changes in powerful institutions, development donors, and in the global economic, social, cultural and political *status quo* on which

the primacy of these institutional rests (McGee, 2002: 101). However, the use of the PRA offers not just a toolkit for transforming the development paradigm, but a framework for analysis and awareness-raising that would be capable, over time, of convincing a critical mass of people of the need for transformation (op. cit., 99). Participation in projects is important to bring people such as beneficiaries, stakeholders, actors, into the development process. However, the challenge is how to transform the development paradigm, making it more democratic and equitable (McGee, 2002: 105). The limitations of participatory methodology are concerned with taking more account of the changing nature of participation. McGee (2002) points out two schools of participatory methodology practice: participation in a project that is characterized by a large technical concern to improve the efficiency of donor-designed and donor-driven projects, and the participatory development that is based on the notion of people as conscious agents in social and political life (2002).

Cooke and Kothari (2001) argue that the participatory approaches demand a rethink. They argue that “participation in development is becoming tyrannical, since it concentrated on the matter of how the practitioner operates or the specificity of the techniques and tools employed” (Cooke and Kothari, 2001: 7). In order that participation is institutionalised, it will be more cost and time effective and sustainable to carry out a participatory evaluation even for small governance projects. However, the problem is that participation is used arbitrarily, squeezing out alternative or conventional methods (Cooke and Kothari, 2001: 13) without paying sufficient attention to powerless groups of people. The current emphasis on participatory processes has been described as a new dogma and tyranny (Kothari, 2001: 8), since participation in decisions reinforces the interests of the already

powerful. Nevertheless, it has been acknowledged as significant to some academics and development practitioners.

The most important factor is to focus on discourses of participatory development itself and in the practice that embodies the potential exercise of power in political discourse (Cooke and Kothari, 2001: 7). As is argued by Hickey and Mohan (2004), participation has actually deepened and extended its role in development, with a new range of approaches to participation emerging across theory, policy and practice (2004: 3). Despite the controversy concerning the debate about participation as a tyrannical action, there remains a strong sense in participatory development that the proper objective of participation is to ensure the 'transformation' of existing development practice (Hickey and Mohan, 2004: 13).

Participation and Governance for Sustainable Livelihoods

The rhetoric of sustainable development has become the accepted response to the environmental challenges faced by contemporary societies (Smith et al., 2000; Toner and Franks, 2006). As the concept becomes more widely accepted amongst politicians, policy-makers and the public, evidence is building about its practical significance. Attention is increasingly focusing on the relative roles and responsibilities of citizens and consumers, individuals and institutions, and local and national spaces, in translating statements of intent into practical actions. Smith et al. (2000) for example, examines a research¹² programme from the UK Department for Environment, a Sustainable Communities Project (SCP). The research demonstrates

¹² This research was one of the five pilot SCPs around the country set up by Going for Green (GFG), a national government body in the wake of the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) to promote citizen action on the environment. The research arose out of the involvement of a team of social science researchers, based at the University of Cambridge, in the project between 1996 and 1999.

the existence of wider involvement in the debate of what these important experiments mean for national and international debates surrounding sustainability and community. They argue that there is a number of means, all based on the principal that individual and community action can have a significant aggregate impact on local and global environmental problems (Smith et al., 2000: 161).

Governance emerges as a new theme in development co-operation, defined as a reform strategy, and a particular form to strengthen the institutions of civil society with the objective of making them more accountable, open and transparent and more democratic (Gaventa, 2004; Cooke, 2004). This brings together older concepts of stakeholders' rights and public accountability with recent interpretations of citizenship and policy (Gaventa and Valderrama, 1999: 34). Crook (2003: 77) argues that the degree of responsiveness to the poor and the extent to which there is an impact on poverty are determined primarily by the politics of local-central relations and the general regime context. The translation of good government into better lives for the poor is expected to happen via the mediation of civil society.

For Toner and Franks (2006: 83), participation is only one of the sustainable livelihood principles¹³ to play an active role in intervention. These principles have been in the debates surrounding the process and people-centred (bottom-up) approaches to development management (op. cit., 81). Participation also becomes linked with the establishment of rural livelihood development carried out by donors and governmental development agencies through programmes and project development (McGee, 2002). The ideas of people's participation as an active process

¹³ See Toner and Franks (2006: 83) for more. Based on analysis of the 10 development interventions through research exploring in place, they argue that sustainable livelihood principles are: poor as a focus; participation; partnership; holistic approach; policy and institutional linkages; building on strengths; dynamism and flexibility in learning; accountability; responsiveness and sustainability.

of direct involvement in the political structures that govern national life first emerged through the debates on scaling up (Bowyer, 2003: 89).

As Bouwen and Taillieu (2004: 145) note, participation becomes 'interactive participation', in which people participate in the development and implementation of plans, by discussion and contributing to solutions. It means that best practice is put forward under shared decision making and self-determination as levels of participation. Shared decision making implies that interested parties not only intervene in planning, but also become partly responsible for the outcomes (Bouwen and Taillieu, 2004: 146). The variety of participation implies a level of difficulty in defining participation. Some authors at one end of the scale regard participation as a managerial technique of joint superior-subordinate decision making, focussing on effectiveness contingencies. At the other end, participation is seen as a management philosophy and a way of involving citizens meaningfully in decisions (Hickey and Mohan, 2004; Gaventa, 2004). Meaningful involvement requires several conditions: (a) people should experience participation as feasible and realistic based on the task; (b) the boundaries and the limits of people's authority and decision making scope should be clearly defined and mutually accepted; (c) participation thrives only in a climate of openness and trust. Defined in this way, participation is not merely an instrument, but a complex system of structure and processes, that builds and supports sharing of legitimate authority over participants and that pervades the way an organization or institution views and relates to its members (Bouwen and Taillieu, 2004)

As was argued by Nelson and Wright (1995: 18) if part of the agenda of participatory development is to bring about a more equitable balance among people in decision

making then it is essential to acknowledge that there are differences in power between individuals and groups. These differences can be reflected in many different ways and are involved in the definition of priorities, and in the design, implementation and evaluation of projects. The main concerns arise over power and dependency in relation to networking procedures. The new technologies have to be seized upon and appropriated to provide social and human development. If not, the knowledge concept will enlarge the levels of exclusion and inequality (Stringer and Reed, 2006: 12). The attention in the social space on change, create ways to integrate local people in planned interventions (Arce, 2003: 849).

The strategies and decision making networks reflect and preserve current privileges, perpetuating inequalities and social exclusion (Gilchrist, 2004: 102). Community development usually operates within political systems where workers can be persuasive either because of their position in the networks or because of their professional status. Therefore, it is implied that specialists in this field must acknowledge their own influence while working to reduce power differentially (op. cit., 110).

Use of the Participatory Approach: Dilemmas and Challenges

Participation has turned into an act of faith in development that is supported by the idea that is inherently a good thing; that a focus on correct techniques is the key to guarantee the achievement of such approaches; and that considerations of power and politics on the whole should be avoided as divisive and obstructive (Clever, 2001:36). In spite of the considerable amount of actions and practices to promote participation, it still presents challenges as it is connected to complex dynamics of interaction at local levels. Both the increased involvement of civil society

organizations and the possibilities for enhanced participation at local level are likely to create an improved participatory and enabling framework for implementing environment projects (Taylor, 2005: 94).

Although participatory approaches have been considered a challenge to incorporate local people's knowledge as a priority in development debate, it raises some dilemmas. One dilemma is that what is expressed as local knowledge results from perceptions of what agency legitimately and pragmatically expects (Mosse, 2001: 21). As Kothari (2001:143) demonstrates participatory approaches to development are about the identification, collection, interpretation, analysis and (re)presentation of particular forms of (local) knowledge. However, it is now widely acknowledged that the production and representation of knowledge is inseparable from the exercise of power. Power is manifested in the workings of the development practitioner and is widely played out by other cultural intermediaries (op. cit., 143).

A participation approach encourages local people to take part in the programme and has an important role in programme decision making. However, this participation fails to realise that people have preferences to explore their resources according to their own interests (Mutebi, 2004, Laderci, 2001). It implies that participatory approaches are not only contextual, but also emphasise poor people's creativity and ability to investigate and analyse their own reality (Chambers, 1994; Laderchi, 2001). Although participatory methods can increase the downward accountability of development processes, these benefits cannot be taken for granted (Mayoux and Chambers, 2005: 272). It is for this reason that much depends on how they are used and by whom and the levels of political will not only to hear the voices of the poor but also to listen and take action (op. cit., 272-3).

The argument about the participatory approach made by Blackburn and Holland (1998) reinforced the idea that to create the conditions for local analysis of existing realities and subsequent courses of action is to change realities. The knowledge that people pursue is not simply articulated in direct and immediate relations between people and environment but is also historically constructed through all sorts of social practices (Kothari, 2001: 143). Mutebi (2004: 290) argues that the introduction of participation in Uganda was essential for opening up the democratisation agenda. It was due to the concerns of local administration and local people that they interacted and influenced the government's actions. This example illustrates that the introduction of participation in Uganda's local government system contributed to institutional change. According to Mutebi (2004: 291), the use of participation aspirations coincided with those of the donor community and those who favoured popular participation. However, the use of participation needs an assessment in order to carry out other phases of government actions. As Taylor (2005: 94) argues, the incorporation of participatory approaches need to be connected with assessment as strategies for development and building capacity for community participate within their project (op. cit., 95).

The example of interaction promoted at local level from Melluci (1996), demonstrates how people create interactions informally to exert influence on policy. Similar to Melluci's point of view, Gilchrist (2004: 49) argues that in the democratic space at local level, people create complex interactions that help people to learn from their experience. It means that people at local level are not isolated; on the contrary, they are involved in complex interactions and create networks to articulate personal problems and to organise for policy influence. However, local level requires a political space (Engberg-Pedersen and Webster, 2002; Rao and Walton, 2004;

Bowyer, 2005). For example, Bowyer (2005: 475) demonstrates that the government in Peru has introduced a new public space that is designed to incorporate ordinary people into diverse spheres of public activities. This initiative has resulted in social policy to promote interaction among state and civil society as an important component in the politics of poverty reduction.

Engberg-Pedersen and Webster (2002: 267) point out two groups of strategies that have surrounded the policy space. One group of strategies is carried out by the poor in an attempt to change their situation in terms of their resources and assets. Another group of strategies is to secure the interests of the poor by effecting change in the actions and policies of others and also bringing about change in public policy and in its implementation.

The new thinking on implementation places a growing emphasis on the 'bottom up' dimension of participation and the idea of space for transformation (Cornwall, 2004; Hickey and Mohan, 2004). However, the focus on implementation is a complex process, necessitating flexible social adaptation by diverse national institutions and actors (Hickey and Mohan, 2004: 3). Policy learning is seen as a good implementation outcome. It is flexible and designed to result in a process of national institutional reflexive engagement (Hickey and Mohan, 2004; Flynn and Kröger, 2003). Policy transfer implies a rather less conscious and substantive copying of policy solutions which may or may not fit particular institutional settings well (Flynn and Kröger, 2003). As Flynn and Kröger (2003) point out, policy learning supports a move away from measuring outcomes by instrumentalist approaches which rely on 'hard' legal and scientific data of transposition or compliance (2003: 152).

Policy learning offers to enhance national administrative implementation capacities, not so much in the sense of formal capacities (resources, staff, fiscal and legal powers) but rather in the sense of capacities to understand, and manage information (Flynn and Kröger, 2003: 153). It implies bringing deeper changes into institutions to change the values, beliefs, preferences and priorities of implementers and target groups. Policy learning also implies a focus on participation as interconnected informal knowledge between those involved in policy action. Johnson and Wilson (2006: 75), for example, recognise the difference of power between north and south and they argue for the possibility of mutual learning from this difference and the potential advantages in the conceptualisation of joint action as learning models. The inherent differences among the partners are seen as opportunities rather than constraints, and learning benefits occur for both partners. Such a process compares favourably with the conventional mechanisms for knowledge transfers and learning in a development context (Johnson and Wilson, 2006: 78).

People also create interaction through informal networks (Gilchrist, 2004). The role of the informal network is crucial in development and in political activity (Castells, 1997). There is a growing recognition of the micro-social processes of collective actions — the interactions, dialogue and emotional ties between participants (Olson, 1965). However, the networks that emerge need to be flexible enough to recognise the diversity of experience and values that motivate people and the power relations that are involved in these models of interaction (Gilchrist, 2004: 51). Rigid procedures can discourage improvement and risk taking. It is rarely possible to estimate the precise outcome of community development and in any case, the requirement to do so stifles the initiative and synergy which networking generates (op. cit., 105). The benefits of networking should be demonstrated over the long

term, but the lack of an eventual outcome can also be criticised. At some stage there must be results in terms of occurrence such as new projects, proposal agreements, funding available, and so on. The less noticeable enhancement should also be recognised, such as increased joining process among agencies and changes in relationships and attitude (Gilchrist, 2004: 105).

Bouwen and Taillieu (2004: 139) argue that it is important to provide incentives for a joint social construction to share knowledge and experiences. Joint learning starts from the different knowledge that the actors bring to the learning, although these are not necessarily equally valued (Johnson and Wilson, 2006: 72). The joint perspective implies that the production of knowledge is involved in a social process and system in terms of a multiplicity of actors and relations. Joint learning is an opportunity for organizational members to use valued skills and abilities for important goals, to gain self-confidence (Bouwen and Taillieu, 2004: 140). However, the production of knowledge is more than a result from interactions among individuals and collective groups of people involved in ongoing negotiation (Long, 1992). It is not simply articulated in the direct and immediate relationship between participants and observers but also historically constructed through all sorts of social practices (Kothari, 2001: 141).

The production of knowledge through the use of participatory approaches in policy action is a new challenge since it moves¹⁴ beyond the boundaries of project or grassroots intervention to other spheres of social, economic and political life (Laderchi, 2001: 21).

¹⁴ See Laderchi (2001) on the analysis of the participation changes in the focus on grassroots projects to community and other spheres of policy development.

Gaventa (2004) demonstrates that in recent years participatory approaches to local governance have been gaining increased attention in the United States, parts of Europe and Latin America. Brazil is seen as a good example of the joint approach where local-level participatory planning is accompanied by a process of participatory budgeting (op. cit., 19).

The use of participatory approaches in Brazil is linked to the 'Participatory Budget',¹⁵ where the state enables the population to discuss the budget as an instrument for governance (Sucupira and Mello, 1999: 8). As Gaventa (2004) argues, how local laws for participation are actually implemented vary a great deal across states and municipalities (2004: 29).

Despite a positive experience of the participatory approach in Brazilian cities, the challenge is in extending the participatory approach to rural areas. The Brazilian *ProAmbiente* programme adopted a participatory approach and offers analysis of the participation experience to involve local people in public action debates and rural policy development issues. The challenge is to understand the impact of programme and policy development at local level. The local space involves complex interactions among local institutions/development agencies and between local people. Although there are examples of other projects that focus on participation in Brazil, there is little evidence that they have resulted in policies that are more responsive to the citizens or more inclusive of rural people's livelihood and development. The *ProAmbiente* programme is particularly interesting as a means to illustrate the route of change from a project at grassroots level to a governmental programme and policy at local

¹⁵ The Workers Party (*Partido dos trabalhadores*) incorporated the participatory approach in Porto Alegre as the first implementation of a 'Participatory Budget'. Other municipalities followed it as instrumental for governance. See <http://www.zmag.org/content/showarticle.cfm>

level, involving non-government organisations as intermediaries for rural policy development actions.

Relevance of Analysis at Different Levels

The participatory approach is related in a complex model of interaction (Edwards and Hulme, 2000; Arce, 2003) at the macro, intermediary and micro levels. Booth (2003), for example, identifies the existence of two traditions of research that are becoming visible in the analysis of social development processes. First, there is the macro-level tradition of working downwards from the national level to particular institutions and programmes; and second, the micro-level tradition, like the actor-oriented approach, working upwards from the level of individual actions (Booth, 2003: 81). The analysis of the interaction among the notions of micro and macro levels explores how 'social reality' is constituted in development processes (Edwards and Hulme, 2000; Arce, 2003). It implies that the macro-micro interaction makes development studies relevant especially in regarding the ways in which local people and policies come together.

The intermediary level is seen as a space for NGOs to open up channels for participation and changes of governance structures in favour of democratisation (Tendler, 1997; Edwards and Hulme, 2000; Fowler, 2002). In this way, the NGOs are singled out as important intermediary organisations to strengthen sectors of civil society to become more potent political forces in their own right, engaging in policy advocacy in both national and international forums. However, NGOs on a regular basis have difficulty in interacting effectively with social, economic, and political matter at national and international levels (Edwards and Hulme, 2000: 44). Faced

with this, NGOs are asking themselves searching questions about their future role and effectiveness, and are experimenting with a range of strategies to increase, or 'scale up', the impact of their development work (op. cit., 45).

NGOs play a key role at the intermediary level as they bring with them a certain amount of autonomy to promote encounters with state institutional structures (Clark, 1997: 199). However, NGOs depend on their connections to or usefulness for local constituencies (Edwards and Hulme, 1997, 2000). They are conceptualised as a space where interfaces between administrative policies and peoples' courses of action take place, and as a location where different agents encounter one another (Arce, 2003; Clark, 1997).

From Arce's (2003) point of view, analysis of the intermediary level is a fundamental way to go beyond notions of micro and macro levels of analysis. Arce (2003) argues for the metaphor¹⁶ of the middle ground to understand local interactions and to provide a way to visualise social relations (2003: 854). The metaphor of the middle ground attempts to re-conceive the context of social ordering and the interpretation of local interactions through the construction of objects of examination. The middle ground helps to identify how development policies are used to intervene in people's social relations and in the process can generate new collective representations (Edwards and Hulme, 2000: 52). An important element that has contributed to building up the metaphor of the middle ground is how the re-

¹⁶ See Arce (2003) for emphasis on the middle ground as a metaphor that encompasses two different sociological traditions. He points to the work of Mannheim (1948) and its influence on the analysis of relations between the individual and the social order for problematising the nature of planning freedom. The sociological tradition of Durkheim's (1933) ideas about the social basis of cognition as the essence of collective representation is also used. These representations inform the action of socially constituted individuals, shaping concepts and the meanings given to things in practice.

conceptualisation of micro and macro traditions in relation to an organizing context, carries policy into society (Arce, 2003: 847).

The focus on interaction between programme and community is a significant part of the interaction. It is argued that integrating macro and micro levels of analysis is to find a point of conjuncture to be implemented into a new proposal of rural development policy. The action that circulates through different social relations generating different types of linkages and shaping other courses of actions is embedded in the different connections to the life worlds (Long, 1992). The local is seen as a connected space that encompasses the relationship between people's knowledge and policy practices (Booth, 2003: 81). As Gilchrist (2004:7) argues, the personal relationships and social networks established through community activities appear to bring considerable benefits in terms of people's well-being. However, relationships are not always universally beneficial, either for the individual or for society as a whole (op. cit., 9).

The interface point of view focuses on social practice among different actors that are linked through their 'multiple realities' (Arce and Long, 2002; Arce, 2003). However, the actor-oriented approach does not differentiate between different types of room for planning and outcomes for individual and collective rights. In this sense, the actor-oriented approach is unable to formulate a way out of the existing economic paradigm, or to suggest different policy relationships in accord with new images of development (Mejia, 2004; Gilchrist, 2004). Although at times 'the interface' was studied and presented as something more than economic reproduction (Long, 1992; Arce, 2003), the multiple realities are seen to generate discontinuities that social actors seek to bridge by drawing on experiences. The actor-oriented approach does

not capture the form and substance of the 'struggle for life' through which actors seek to redefine the boundaries of their life worlds (Long, 1992).

Midgley's (2000: 19) proposal is to take an analytical base for the process of knowledge production. Mejia (2004: 65) focuses on the existence of imposition in processes of knowledge production and/or reproduction, and to enable people to develop some kind of thinking autonomy that will in turn help them to resist imposition of forms of knowledge coming from other individuals, groups or institutions. Mejia (2004: 67), for example, argues that the act of identifying something as a form of knowledge involves a deep act of interpretation which depends on the interpreter's own reading of reality. Theorists like Freire (1972, 1974) argued that to raise awareness (*conscientization*) the strategy involves holding a particular reading of reality, and thus the end of the dialogical process or in at least in some directions. Freire's concern is inequality and oppression (Freire, 1972: 17). From Freire's viewpoint, a person with a critical consciousness is able to perceive the factual reason of oppression in society, which in turn enables a person to take action in the "real" world to change it. A critical consciousness means organizing knowledge in a clear way to provide people with the tools to recognise and question the validity of forms of knowledge and social structures (Mejia, 2004: 64). Freire (1972) argued that people have to build their ability to think for themselves (Freire, 1972: 57). He argued that knowledge corresponds to three historical and cultural levels or stages of consciousness. The first one is that of semi-intransitive consciousness, which is characterized by a limited understanding of reality mostly based on issues of survival. In the second stage, naïve transitivity, people engage with the world around them and are able to acknowledge the existence of more relevant issues about their situation than those implied in mere survival. The third

stage, critical transitivity, implies a deep and holistic understanding of reality (op. cit., 48-9).

Freire's theory of popular education stressed the need for raising awareness as a technique for political awareness of the poor and oppressed (Freire, 1974: 19). He argued for the importance of engaging the poor and oppressed in a dialogue about power, inequality and oppression. Poor people also would appreciate if their position in the social structure were to be empowered to engage in radical collective action. As Bouwen and Taillieu (2004: 138) argue, empowerment provides the opportunity for organizational members to use valued skills and abilities towards important goals, to gain self-confidence and to engage in co-ownership of projects.

In a recent study, Mayoux and Chambers (2005) state the importance of congruence from the bottom up. Culture, institutions, procedures and relationships at the middle and upper-level of an organisation are congruent with and support those at the grassroots. Mayoux and Chambers (2005: 289) also argue that many bureaucrats and administrators demand a radical reversal of perceptions, attitude and behaviour to achieve bottom-up congruence. However, the challenge is to promote a congruence of commitment among practices and relationship at all levels. Cultural examination takes into account the interdependence between the social, cultural, economic and ecological aspects ruling the life of these groups. It means that cultural reality is not isolated. There is a complex interrelation between a group's identity, ecology, social organization and religious beliefs (Mejía, 2004: 71).

Relevance to the Local Situation: Community as a Space of Social Change

The term community has diverse meanings and divisions but is defined as a space for the diversity of knowledge and cultural resources as important part of social life rather than unreal or imaginary (Anderson, 1991: 27). It can be described as a human group that shares a common interest (Douglas, 2004: 85), a place in which people live such as a village or city or something that people have in common with each other and distinguishes them in a significant manner from the members of other groups. Despite of a range of meaning for community, this term is closer to the meaning of a space of relations, where groups of people share specific geographic and social contexts for activities, according their knowledge resources and identity (Mejía, 2004: 76). Castells (1997) argues that the term community is involved in a process of a construction of identity that is people's source of meaning and experience.

A significant factor is the recognition that diversity is part of a cultural and knowledge process of production (Castells, 1997; Chambers, 1998). Communities continually face a number of change events that influence local people to produce and reproduce knowledge through practice and social interaction among those with whom they interact and influence. People hold varying beliefs and values that are consistent with a community and have acquired amounts and types of capital for change. However, there usually is ambiguity and uncertainty about the impact of change events that are of a political nature such as technological or policy decisions.

A focus on the social space for change is made visible in the ways individuals, households and groups are integrated for planning interventions into existing

strategies or how people generate their own paths for social change (Kelly and Steed, 2004; Mayoux and Chambers, 2005). The model of community change highlights the importance of defining strategies to mediate the relationship between the change event and the impact. However, Kelly and Steed (2004: 210) argue that although governments spend considerable resources on programmes at community level, very little work has been undertaken to explore why communities respond differently, and what strategies they use to manage change. The actor-oriented approach contributed to realising the significance of unintended outcomes in planned intervention. In contrast to perspectives that viewed centralized policies as the only organized domain within which development takes place, actor-oriented perspectives contribute to the understanding of how people could affect policy outcomes (Kelly and Steed, 2004: 212).

Kaplan (2003: 62) argues that groups composed of individuals holding different beliefs, values, and capital and/or insufficient amounts of necessary capital may find themselves considered peripheral, merely tangent to or lying completely outside the boundaries of the larger community. Individuals acquire capital and an identity valued by the community through immersion in its environment and legitimate participation in its practices. It is through social interaction that people come to learn the valued structures, knowledge, ways and practices, and acquire valued capital as a result of a range of activities.

Community social structures, their power relations, and requirements for legitimacy define what is possible for learning, identity development and participation. The inequitable structures and power relations within a community can open, limit or close legitimate participation to individuals or groups within it and, therefore, their

capital and identity acquisition (Kaplan, 2003; Plowman, 2003). The hierarchy have influence on people who have little decision-making power about their experiences, the values, ways and practices of the group. Within such a context, legitimacy and full participation is not possible for all.

Although scientists, practitioners and governments spend considerable resources on developing and implementing intervention programmes at the community level, very little work has been undertaken to explore the strategies that communities use to manage change (Uphoff et al., 1998; Booth, 2003). Through community participation, local knowledge, expertise and resources are mobilized and an opportunity is created for forming shared meanings that will increase the chances for the successful implementation of the intervention (Wield, 2003; Uphoff et al., 1998). As Wield (2003: 185) argues, when communities are confronting change, they will respond in ways compatible with their characteristics and available resources. However, in some instances, communities learn a particular strategy and rely on that strategy regardless of the circumstances of the change (Hickey and Mohan, 2004; Uphoff et al., 1998).

To accept the learning process as the mode of operation in rural development is to recognise the nature of reality, which is highly contingent and interactive, locally variable, and continually changing (Uphoff et al., 1998: 20). This implies that strategies can be learned collectively and can become a community resource leading to an increased capacity to manage change. For example, people from the case study in this thesis are interconnected through family practices and land livelihood resources (See the debate in Chapter Seven). Local knowledge resources are embedded in interactions with nature and the management of the natural environment

and are based on knowledge gained over time. However, local knowledge attempts to address the needs of both spatial and social contexts, which is often ignored by the experts, whose knowledge is based on scientific theories. With the state control of forest management, expert or scientific knowledge becomes the basis for environmental development. The involvement in a diverse environment resource is due to beneficial conditions such as soil fertility, land access and family-based labour.

A focus on micro-level research is required to understand which forms of participation work in which kinds of spaces to provide people with the opportunity to realise inclusive, active citizenship (Cornwall, 2002). Olson (1965) argued that the very existence of collective action was problematic and needed justifying. Olson assumed that the reason for collective action was to produce public goods. A key aspect of public goods is that they are non-excludable. All participants must have access to them. However, this leads to the problem of free riding (Harrison and Easton, 2002: 145). As Klammer (2004: 119) argues, some individuals can obtain the benefits of a public good without contributing to its production. It means that given the possibility of free riding, no rational actor would join a collective action since the actor could not be sure that the personal costs of producing the public good would not exceed its benefit to him/her. As Olson demonstrates, ‘...unless the number of individuals in a group is quite small, or else there is coercion or some other special device to make individuals act in their common interest, rational self-interested individuals will not act to achieve their common or group interest’ (Olson, 1965: 2).

The notion of citizenship also captures the broadening of the participation agenda, whereby the social and political agendas of participation and good governance have

increasingly converged (Gaventa, 2004: 1). As Hickey and Mohan (2004: 5) argue, participation and good governance are both the result of the state moving closer to the people and the infiltration of participatory approaches within bureaucratic institutions. The engagement with issues of participation and local governance creates enormous opportunities for redefining and deepening meanings of democracy, for linking civil society and government reforms in ways, for extending the rights of inclusive citizenship (Cornwall, 2002; Gaventa, 2004). Defined in this way, participation is not merely an instrument, but a complex system of structure and processes, that builds and supports sharing of legitimate authority over participants and pervades the way an organization or institution views and relates to its members (Bouwen and Taillieu, 2004: 138). If participation is seen not as a mere management technique but as a practice, then social dynamics comes into focus, leading to a sharing of responsibility, information exchange, and a shared construction of reality (op. cit., 139). Information exchange provides the cognitive basis for enhancing the interchange between expert knowledge and experiential knowledge. A joint social construction of reality emerges from shared experiences and enacts formal as well as informal coordinating patterns of behaviour (Booth, 2003; Bouwen and Taillieu, 2004). However, Gaventa (2004) argues that there are critical challenges to ensure that the work promotes pro-poor and social justice outcomes, to develop new models and approaches where enabling conditions are not favourable, to avoid an narrow focus on the local (2004: 39).

Conclusion: Integrating the Main Concepts into a Framework

Despite all consideration of interconnectedness over the concepts of knowledge, power and culture, what is more important is to understand knowledge as a component of power that is transferred from one social context to another within a system of value and beliefs (Jacobs, 2002; Douglas, 2004). Knowledge, as a component of power, is an accumulation of social norms, rituals and practices that are culturally, socially and politically produced as a powerful normative construct (Cooke and Kothari, 2001: 8).

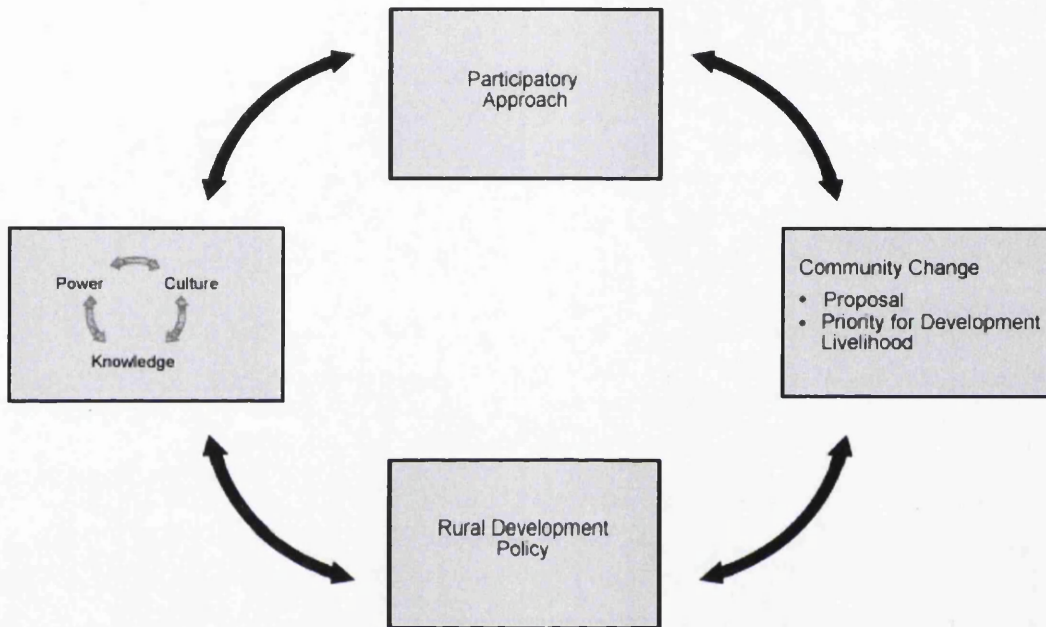
Instead of understanding culture as a dynamic, social construct with power relations, cultural aspects have just been assumed to have a positive impact on public actions (Rao and Walton, 2004: 3). The positive idea is that culture provides a vehicle for building public action in development and for the implementation of sustainable policies with more inclusive and long-term strategies. This means that culture in development is particularly important to an adequately capacious framework (Sen, 2004: 41).

The aim of using a framework that involves knowledge, power and culture within a development context is to examine the impact of government programme actions in the rural communities. This study focuses on the impact of the Brazilian government programme *ProAmbiente* upon rural communities of Pará. If development relates to increasing or improving living standards through social and economic change, then it will impact on, and be mediated through culture (Sen, 2004: 53). If culture in development is understood as a process of social change with shared values, aspirations and ideas, the questions to be asked are: How do 'development' interventions provide for or invest in communities with the relevant cultural

knowledge required to successfully participate in their own development livelihood?

Is the policy action receptive to the proposals and priorities of the local people?

Figure 1
Theoretical Framework of the Analysis



Source: Created by author

The central issue of the framework is to examine the key feature of governmental development programmes in implementing policies at local level. This thesis argues that the complex interaction between programme and policy development and local people emerges as a new challenge in the participatory policy model. It is difficult however to fill the gaps opened up for participation through the engagement of people in policy issues. A great deal of the framework presented is to illustrate understanding of how a macro-level programme geared towards change in the micro-level can result in a positive impact on community development livelihoods.

The intermediary level is another component of the interaction to be considered. Although the main challenge is to be aware of the programme level's change to a micro-level, it also looks more closely at how organisations such as NGOs interact in diverse levels of contexts, and their links with policy implementation and local people.

The micro level of analysis centres attention on the community beneficiaries of the programme. The emphasis is on interaction between the programme (via the intermediary NGOs) and the strategies of development livelihoods and their similarity with local knowledge priorities.

Chapter Three

Introducing the Case Study

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to introduce the *ProAmbiente* programme, the case study of this thesis. It examines the socio-political environment that contributed to the programme and the programme's model, operation and organisational, administrative and financial structures.

The *ProAmbiente* (Socio and Environmental Development Programme for Rural Family-based Production) was chosen as a case study because it is the first programme from the federal Brazilian government in Amazônia to transform public policy by encouraging people's participation, knowledge and culture at local level. The chapter is divided into five sections. The first section is an overview of the origins of the programme; the second and third sections deal with the *ProAmbiente* model and operation and emphasises the innovative characteristics of the programme. The fourth section deals with the programme's organisation, administration and financial structure. The aim of the fourth section is to highlight the complexity of carrying out such a multifaceted programme as public policy. The final section stresses key issues that should be considered in analysing the *ProAmbiente*.

The *ProAmbiente's* Background

It is hard to talk about the *ProAmbiente's* emergence. It did not come about from only one factor... Actually, the *ProAmbiente* emerged from the many struggles of Amazonian peasants and family-based agricultural producers during the 1990s... There was a period with many demands for public policy from the family-based agricultural producers. Also there was a period of significant events in terms of ecology, cooperation and participation (...)¹⁷

Although many factors had influenced the *ProAmbiente's* creation, three of them were fundamental to its establishment, these are: (i) environmental policy changes within the models implemented for Brazilian Amazônia development; (ii) The rural social movements in Brazil, Amazônia and Pará State; (iii) recent national and regional policies of credit for rural production. Although they are examined separately, these factors are intrinsically interrelated.

(i) Environmental policy changes within the models implemented for Brazilian Amazônia development

A historically specific and dynamic relational approach to the study of the social movement helps to grasp the complex interplay between internal and external influences on collective identity. However, factors internal and external to social movements are not stable. The political opportunities, actors, resources and ideologies shift over time. These factors do not operate singularly in a linear causal model; on the contrary, they interact in a dialectical fashion to produce historically specific outcomes (Blair, 2000; Bauman, 2000b, 2001). For example, there is at least twenty years of academic commentary on the history of models for Brazilian Amazônia development at regional (Costa, 1995), national (Martins, 2002) and international levels (Hall, 1991; Bunker, 1985). Though using different perspectives of analysis, they focus on the same issue: the Brazilian models for development, first

¹⁷ Head of one of the NGOs involved in the management of the *ProAmbiente*.

concentrated on the extraction of natural resources (Mahar, 1979; Santos, 1980). Secondly, they focused on large-scale agricultural production and cattle ranching¹⁸ (Mahar, 1979; Bunker, 1985). Thirdly, they focused on the exploitation of mineral resources, the implantation of mineral industries and hydroelectric projects. All caused environmental disruption and social impact (Hall, 1991: 41).

The first dictatorship model for Amazônia development was based on large scale agricultural production, agribusiness and cattle ranching and was linked to two significant programmes: a programme of fiscal incentives and a programme of colonisation and *assentamento* (settlement) (Hall, 1991: 18). The first programme attracted medium and well established businesses from the south and south-east of Brazil interested in expansion and the latter attracted migrants from the north-east of the country (the *nordestinos* who were involved in struggles for productive land for their subsistence) (Brum, 2005). The programme of fiscal incentives for agribusiness facilitated the implantation of large-scale farming that initially impacted on the environment with deforestation on a grand scale. At the same time, wood exploration emerged as a large business. The infrastructure established¹⁹ by colonisation also had an adverse effect on the natural environment. Both programmes caused a social impact on the 'traditional resident population'²⁰ that occupied the land designated for the programmes. Land concentration was one among several other consequences (Hall, 1991: 187). From that time onwards, social conflicts for land occupation and exploration emerged as a huge problem in the region.

¹⁸ The model of large agricultural production and cattle ranching coexisted with some industrial initiatives in the state of Amazonas (free-trade zone).

¹⁹ Such infrastructure was, and still is, very poor.

²⁰ There is regional literature debating the concept of 'traditional resident population' (Conceição, 2001; Maneschy, 2005 and others) that goes beyond the scope of this work. In this work, the concept means groups of families (descendents of Amerindians, slaves and European people) who occupied the land for generations and used the land as a space for social reproduction rather than economic exploration.

Directly associated with the phenomenon of land concentration is the growth of rural violence (Hall, 1991: 188). The poor infrastructure offered by the federal government in the programmes of *assentamento* and agribusiness allied with other economic factors²¹ encouraged businesses to focus on wood exploration rather than on agricultural cultivation. It distorted the aim of the programmes and expanded environmental impacts and social conflicts.

Environmental and social disruption continued with the exploitation of mineral resources through industrialisation (Hall, 1991; Fearnside, 2000). The industries themselves and the hydroelectric infrastructure built to support industry also required the use of huge areas of lands. At present, adverse effects on the natural environment are highly evident with river and air pollution and decreasing fish stocks, all depleting the once noble woods and regional forest resources. At the implantation of these projects, deforestation of great areas was the main environmental disruption (Fearnside, 1990, 2000). The social impact over the traditional resident population was more intensive compared to agribusiness as an increasing population migrated to the areas where industry and hydroelectric dams were installed. New villages and towns were created with very poor infrastructure (Hebette and Colares, 1990).

During the 1980s, Brazilian Amazônia faced three great environmental problems from the patterns of development implemented by the military government and continued by the first post-dictatorship, civil government (Fearnside, 1990, 2000). Firstly, there was the rapid growth of wood exploitation and forest clearance in the former colonised areas. Secondly, there was massive jungle clearance for the expansion of agriculture and cattle ranching using slash and burn; and thirdly, there was the expansion of areas of settlement to cope with intense migration. At the end

²¹ These factors are the costs of production, market, margin of income, etc.

of the 1980s, these problems had grown more serious, particularly in the states of Pará and Rondônia (Martine, 1990), arousing national and international attention. At that time, there was already scientific evidence that forest burning could accelerate global warming by contributing to the emission of 'greenhouse gases' (mainly carbon dioxide). Brazil was internationally identified as the largest contributor of emissions of 'greenhouse gases' among the tropical countries (Fearnside, 2000: 17).

The production of carbon dioxide from fuel burning has been implicated in human-induced global warming (Fearnside, 2000: 20). When fossil fuels, such as coal or oil burn, they release carbon dioxide, which then forms a layer in the earth's atmosphere, preventing heat radiated from the earth from escaping. This has been termed the 'greenhouse effect' because it results in the earth's atmosphere becoming warmer (Willis, 2005). While this process can have beneficial results in particular locations, for example by producing climatic conditions conducive to growing particular crops, overall the greenhouse effect is regarded as having negative consequences because of its association with rising sea levels and potential increases in desertification (Barrow, 1991, 2005). Other greenhouse gases such as methane and nitrous oxide, while naturally occurring, are also being emitted in great quantities because of industrialization, agricultural intensification and urbanization (Willis, 2005).

As a result of the environmental debate, the first Brazilian post-dictatorship government carried out certain initiatives with an environment focus such as the creation of IBAMA – Instituto Brasileiro do Meio Ambiente e dos Recursos Naturais Renováveis (Brazilian Institute for the Environment and Renewable Natural Resources), the programme Nossa Natureza (Our Nature Programme) and FNMA – Fundo Nacional do Meio Ambiente (National Fund for the Environment) (Barbanti,

1999). However, because of the political fragility of the federal government at that time, such initiatives offered more rhetoric discourse than effective results (Hebette and Colares, 1990; Tura, 1996).

(ii) The Rural Social Movements in Brazil, Amazônia and Pará State

Although a broad range of studies about social movements focuses on organisations, there is no clear consensus on the organizational factors that impact on these movements (Tura, 1996: 23). Several characteristics appear in organizational-based movements including leadership, organisational structures and resources. However, in case of organisations that are working in a common pool in a network setting, they can consolidate their strengths to influence policy and institutional change. In Brazil, for example, the organizations involved in the social movement achieved social and political influence through a range of protests (Hebette and Colares, 1990). Despite differing characteristics and the roles that each organisation has, the network that they created had the social and political influence to implement changes (Tura, 1996: 22).

The agricultural model implemented in Brazil since the slavery period is marked by land concentration (Martins, 2002) and by the exclusion of a great part of the rural population's access to land. This imbalance has been contested for decades and during 1960s it reached its peak. This protest, which was linked to other social issues and economic inequalities, was the reasoning behind the armed forces' takeover of the federal government to control the growing social movements in 1964 (Brum, 2005). The dictatorship government from 1964 to 1985 was regarded as a period of political repression. Although oppressed by the military government, the social movement was still organised in some areas of the country, particularly in the large state capitals such as São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and Belo Horizonte (op. cit. 102). In

spite of permanent conflict, it was only at the end of the military period that the social movement increased its power to confront the federal government and to focus attention on land inequalities (Almeida, 1990: 232).

Beginning in mid-1985, the social movement launched a campaign of land occupation across the country. This was considered a well-planned action because it put together two groups of socially-economically excluded groups — the landless peasants and the urban inhabitants of the slums (*favelas*) (Tura, 1996). The Brazilian landless movement became the largest social movement in Latin America and is one of the strongest grassroots movements in the world. Its members have not only managed to secure land, thereby guaranteeing food security for their families, but have come up with an alternative socio-economic development model centred on people rather than on profits (op. cit.). Social mobilization itself becomes a factor in the volatile political opportunity structure for incipient movements (Meyer, 2002:14).

Social protest provides new opportunities for other issues. For example, political factors also defined the social movement model and the type of relationship between the MST and its partners. The MST emerged with the support of established social and political networks promoted through Catholic religious groups mainly in area of land struggles. Such a network was formed by Comissão Pastoral da Terra – CPT (Pastoral Land Commission), Federação dos Trabalhadores e Trabalhadoras da Agricultura – FETAGRI/PA (Pará State Federation of Agricultural Workers), Comunidades Eclesiásticas de Base - CEBs (Grassroots Ecclesiastic Communities)²², Sindicatos dos Trabalhadores Rurais - STRs (Rural Workers' Unions) and Partido dos Trabalhadores - PT (Workers' Party) (Tura, 1996: 23).

²² The CEBs started in the 60s and made significant changes in the Catholic Church by working with poor people from remote communities.

The CPT has worked together with trade unions, small producers' organisations, social movements and other people's initiatives. The core agenda of CPT was to give support to peasants and the landless in their social struggles and to provide them with pastoral, theological, juridical and political support (CPT, 2004). With the creation of the CPT, the Catholic Church engaged in a struggle against the landowners' economic interests (still characterised by the exploitation of rural workers' labour) (Tura, 2000a). This struggle has also been against the state, which has been viewed as the main player in the economic model that has led to land conflict (Almeida, 1990; Brum, 2005).

Both movement adherents and their opponents negotiate the socially constructed collective identity of a social movement community. An understanding of collective identity and social structural opportunities must focus on this dynamic interaction (Meyer, 2002:15). The CPT, for example, has played a crucial role in strengthening the rural social movements in Pará by supporting rural workers and their organisations who were affected by the accelerated rate of agricultural modernization that took place in the region from the dictatorship government period onward (Tura, 2000a: 33). Unlike the south of Brazil, the emergence of the rural social movement in Amazônia is directly linked to the top-down economic model of development established by the military administration (Tura, 2000a: 34-35). The role of the CPT has been to motivate people to act collectively to raise awareness of and defend the rights of rural families, acts of rural displacement and to lobby the government to provide land to poor peasants (CPT, 2004).

From its formation in Comunidades Eclesiásticas de Base - CEBs, the CPT has promoted strengthening the relationship between faith groups and policy. Solidarity

has grown between the marginalised poor who have organized themselves into community groups with the support of socio-educational facilitators.²³ Directly and indirectly inspired by religious values, the CEBs have engaged in practical self-help projects, and have values such as describing life as the 'gift of the creator', and seeking the empowerment of the poor as an essential part of people's social-economic development. The Catholic Church and CEBs from the end of the 1970s were important not just in generating a greater 'awareness' among peasant groups but also in creating self-confidence as a basis for a new cultural identity (Tura, 1996: 30).

Pará State experienced two phases of rural social mobilisation. According to Tura (1996), the first cycle started at the end of the 1970s and was a long phase of grassroots mobilisation followed by a struggle to control existing STRs. The Catholic Church and the CEBs developed the rural workers' consciousness of social groups working together in an organized manner to overcome issues of land and rights as part of citizenship in the regional society. The first focal point was to conquer the STRs. The STRs were considered the main political space for rural producers, peasant and/or landless peasants. In Amazônia many STRs were created between the 1960s and the 1970s as part of an official apparatus to put rural workers under government rules and control²⁴. Until the middle of the 1980s, most STRs were controlled by large landowners and merchants and were designed for social

²³ Paulo Freire influenced the idea of liberation in his book *Pedagogy of Oppressed* (1972). Freire's text is the response of a creative mind and a sensitive conscience to the extraordinary misery and suffering of the people around him. He dedicated his life to the struggle against hunger and the rights for excluded peoples. He pioneered a literacy programme, which enabled people to come to a new awareness of themselves and to look critically at the social situation in which they found themselves, often leading them to take the initiative in acting to transform the society that had denied them this opportunity of participation.

²⁴ The STRs managed the welfare policy for the rural population and provided a system of control. The welfare policy was called Fundo de Assistência e Previdência do Trabalhador Rural – FUNRURAL (Fund for the Assistance and Insurance of Rural Workers).

assistance rather than workers' representation. The decisive issue of the social movement supported by the CEBs was to change the role of STRs from passive to active social organisations. The viewpoint of CPT agents was that the STRs belonged to workers rather than to a small group of directors.

The first cycle lasted until the late 1980s when the movement was already in control of the majority of STRs in the state and also controlled the state federation of rural unions – FETAGRI/PA. After all its achievements in the first cycle, the movement experienced a short period of crisis. Some leaders defected and allied themselves with conservative politicians to pursue their own interests; other felt lost after conquering the labour representation structure without having the experience to manage the power they had earned (Tura, 1996).

Rural workers' social movement from the Transamazônica region played an important role in overcoming this crisis. Rural workers' social movement aimed to link the labour structure to the pressing needs of their constituents. By identifying the needs of the peasantry, the rural workers' social movement was able to set a new agenda that was much more attractive to grassroots members and therefore increased popular participation in policymaking. As the rural workers' social movement became more organised and the political regime more democratic, workers were able to get significant concessions from the state. The combination of protest and negotiation is particularly well represented in the annual demonstrations that workers organise in the state and federal capital cities known as *Gritos* (meaning 'screams') (Tura, 1996; 2000a).

Many of the *Gritos* took place in Pará during 1990–1995 and were motivated by several socio-political issues operating in the region: violence against leaders of rural

smallholders, advocacy for agrarian reform, discontent with mega-projects like hydroelectric dams, fighting for better conditions in the rural area like roads, electricity and changes in credit policy (Tura, 2000b; Costa, 2000). (See example of the Transamazônica).

This programme emerged from the social movement. The FETAGRI/PA was responsible for this process. The strong social movement of civil society was important for bridge-building the *ProAmbiente* project. This is the reason why there are three poles in Pará State (Transamazônica, Rio Capim and Marajó).²⁵

The greatest achievement of the rural workers during the second cycle, however, was the creation of a new form of rural credit designed to meet the needs of the poorest peasants in the region called FNO – Rural Especial. The *Gritos* is still an annual event and has been adding to its agenda other issues linked to rural workers' demands and credit policy (Tura, 1996: 16).

Details of FNO and FNO – Rural Especial policies of credit will be explained in the following subsection. However, what is important to point out is that the *ProAmbiente* programme is a proposal that emerged from inside the social movement's struggle for credit policy reform.

Speaking of the *ProAmbiente* before it was public policy, I could say that it was one of most important phases (of the social movement) that I had the opportunity to see. It was a rich process because it had a strong basis of social participation linked with the social movement and with many institutions at the same time such as GTA²⁶, FETAGRI/PA, IPAM²⁷, FASE and EMBRAPA²⁸. It was really a bottom-up process.²⁹

The *ProAmbiente* advocated the enlargement of the credit policy to Amazônia and to include other mechanisms to foster the initiative of 'productive conservation' (Hall, 2000) through 'remuneration of environmental services' (the following section will

²⁵ Interview with a former member of the FETAGRI/PA that took part in the elaboration of the *ProAmbiente* programme proposal.

²⁶ GTA-Grupo de Trabalho Amazônico.

²⁷ IPAM-Instituto de Pesquisa Ambiental da Amazônia.

²⁸ EMBRAPA- Centro de Pesquisa Agroflorestal da Amazônia Oriental.

²⁹ Interview with one of the people responsible for the creation of the *ProAmbiente* initial proposal.

explain the *ProAmbiente* concept and model in detail). Instead of being exclusively a credit policy for production, the proposal of the *ProAmbiente* was to incorporate issues of the environment in the process in order to support (as a priority) the rural producers who could combine production with the conservation of the environment (MMA, 2003).

Taking into account the influence of the social movement on government decision making, the *ProAmbiente* concept has grown in stature since President Lula da Silva took power in 2003. The idea of the *ProAmbiente* arose in 2000 during discussions between the Federações dos Trabalhadores e Trabalhadoras na Agricultura da Amazônia Legal – FETAGs (Federations of Agricultural Workers of Amazônia Legal)³⁰ to define the agenda of the ‘*Grito da Amazônia 2000*’ (2000 Amazônia Scream). The *ProAmbiente* thus emerged under the influence of a social movement carried out by rural workers’ organisations and the recognition of its demands with the government that took power in 2003.

(iii) Recent National and Regional Policies of Credit for Rural Production

Significant events happened between the years of 1985 and 1995 that influenced changes in Amazonian credit policies. The first significant event was the publication of the Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada – IPEA (Institute of Applied Economic Research) report examining the negative impact of the credit policy of fiscal incentives established by the dictatorship government (Gasquez and Yokomizo, 1990: 28).

³⁰ Amazônia Legal is a geographical area established by official agencies during the dictatorship period as a way to delimit development planning. It covers the entire states of Pará, Amazonas, Rondônia, Roraima, Acre and Amapá, and part of the states of Maranhão, Mato Grosso and Tocantins.

The report showed that the incentives promoted to large agribusinesses did not result in economic growth and that the number of jobs created was less than half of that initially planned. Following on from the IPEA publication, the 1985 Brazilian Agricultural-Husbandry census was the second big event. It showed that small-scale producers, despite the absence of credit support, were able to increase values for agricultural crops and husbandry (Costa and Vilar, 2000: 6). Smallholders in properties with less than 200 hectares had an agricultural output value that increased 5% per year in real terms during 1980–1985, and animal (beef and dairy) output value increased 7% per year in the same period (Fearnside, 2000: 12). Both studies were remarkable because they showed the general flaw of the ruling policy and were used from that time onward as evidence that the credit policy adopted in Amazônia, which excluded small-scale producers, needed to be revaluated.

However, the major change was the establishment of the Fundos Constitucionais de Financiamento – FC (Financing Constitutional Funds) by the 1988 Brazilian Constitution and its version in the northern region called Fundo Constitucional do Norte – FNO³¹ (Financing Constitutional Fund for the Northern Region).

³¹ The FC has two other specific funds aside from the FNO. These are the Fundo Constitucional do Nordeste - FNE (Constitutional Fund for the North-East Region) and Fundo Constitucional do Centro-Oeste - FCO (Constitutional Fund for the Centre-West Region). All together compose 3% of the Industrial Production Tax and 3% of the Commercial and Services Circulation Tax. The FNO gets 0.6% of the FC and the rest goes to the FNE (1.8%) and FCO (1.8%) regions.

The funds were created to support projects in less developed regions of the country and to promote more balanced development between the diverse regions. Four principles were established for how FC was to be used:

- (a) decrease intra-regional development;
- (b) promote auto-sufficiency of supply;
- (c) promote regional sustainable development;
- (d) create incentives for family-based labour.

The FNO comprises ten programmes, five for rural development and five for industrial development. As result of the decentralisation policy established by the Brazilian Constitution, each fund has to be administrated in the beneficiary region. The FNO is managed by Banco da Amazônia S.A. - BASA (Bank of Amazônia plc.) and the Agência do Desenvolvimento da Amazônia – ADA (Development Agency for Amazônia) (Tura and Costa, 2000).

The general operation of the FNO involved a series of audiences with the interested sectors of society, such as rural workers' unions and NGOs, to establish operational rules that in practice were not effectively adopted (Tura, 2000b: 37). The initial implementation of FNO agricultural credit in 1990 was criticised as being an extension of previous programmes, which were traditionally biased towards supporting mainly large projects such as extensive cattle-ranching (Mourão, 2000: 145).

Rural social movements controlled by the Rural Workers' Unions were important in changing the initial set of rules, particularly the red tape which prevented small-scale and family-based producers to gain access to credit. Results from the rural social movements culminated in FNO- Rural Especial, a credit line for smallholders and family-based agriculture producers in Amazônia (Tura, 2000a; Hall, 2004). Meanings constructed within movements emerge from interaction between challenges to dominant culture that activists produce and equally contradictory and changeable external political and cultural systems (Whittier, 2002: 301). These movements (as explained in the previous subsection) were able to influence changes in credit policy and to demonstrate the power of rural unions in Amazônia.

Later, in 1994, the proactive³² rural social movement was able to influence the creation of a new national credit line to support small-scale and family-based agricultural producers called PRONAF – Programa Nacional de Fortalecimento da Agricultura Familiar (National Support Programme for Family-based Agriculture). From that time onward, the PRONAF was substituted for the FNO-Especial in Amazônia and has been the most important source of credit for small-scale and family-based agriculture producers (Tura and Costa, 2000) inside the scope of the FNO.

³² Proactive rural social movement means a movement that is not only based on protest, but is a movement that protests and proposes concrete changes in credit policy.

However, the benefits of FNO and PRONAF as a model that might be linked to sustainable development have been questioned citing a lack of concern about the environment. Additionally, studies on responsibility for forest devastation have demonstrated that small-scale, family-based agriculture contributed greatly to Amazonian deforestation (Homma, 1998). Conservationist groups have defended the concept that existing fiscal means could be shaped to favour conservation rather than increasing 'traditional agricultural production'³³.

Amidst such controversies emerged the approach of 'productive conservation' between NGOs and research institutes. Using the concept of the agroforestry system, this approach argues that environmental resources-users should be involved in the process of environmental management. This is the only way to effectively achieve sustainability. The experience of the use of agroforestry systems in closed areas of conservation (conservation units) has led to a proposal to apply a similar system in 'open areas' under the management of the rural population.

In 2000, the rural social movement had the idea of a project to combine production with conservation. In May of that year, when discussing the strategies of the '*Grito da Amazônia 2000*' (2000 Amazônia Scream), the FETAGs debated the needs of the *ProAmbiente* and from then on the idea developed further. (The progress of the construction of the *ProAmbiente* will be explained in subsequent sections). As has been stated previously in this text, one of the innovative characters of the *ProAmbiente* is to link credit and production with the conservation of environment thus creating a financial incentive to reduce the devastation of the forest.

³³ 'Traditional agricultural production' in this context means use of slash and burn and/or heavy equipment (tractors) for land clearance and cultivation.

At present, the *ProAmbiente* has been considered the major initiative to provide rural producers with financial incentives to reduce deforestation (Hall, 2004; Bartels, 2004). The federal government used the proposal and has transformed the programme in public policy with financial incentives through of Payment for Environmental Services – PES, (*Pagamento por Serviços Ambientais*).

The PES is linked to forest management by the local population through which family-based and small-scale producers engage in conservation activities, including the cultivation of permanent tree crops and reforestation. They receive subsidized loans and compensation payment through an environmental service fund (Fundo de Serviço Ambiental).

As the evolution of credit forms show, there are changes in the use of fiscal mechanisms within Brazil; firstly to aid family-based and small-scale producers and secondly to internalise productive conservation as a way to achieve sustainable development and sustainable livelihoods. Such changes, however, are not the exclusive proposals of the federal government; rather they are outcomes of the proposals of the rural social movement that defends the desires and needs of the local, rural population.

The *ProAmbiente* Model

Under the general goal of increasing the rate of carbon sequestration in Amazônia³⁴ (Hall, 2004; MMA, 2005a), the *ProAmbiente*'s aim is to establish a multifunctional model of development that links economic growth, social inclusion and

³⁴ According to Hall (2004), in Amazônia deforestation currently releases an estimated 200 million tons of carbon every year, three times the amount generated by the burning of fossil fuels in the country.

environmental conservation (MMA, 2005a: 3) in rural communities. The core aim of the *ProAmbiente* is to help rural producers to convert the traditional slash and burn agricultural practices that currently prevail in Amazônia into more diversified and sustainable agricultural and extractive practices, thus reducing forest exploitation and emissions of carbon (MMA, 2003; Hall, 2004; Bartels, 2004).

The *ProAmbiente* is based on the concept of ‘productive conservation’ and focuses on rural areas where there is a prevalence of small-scale, family-based production (MMA, 2005a: 4). As stated earlier in this thesis, the term ‘productive conservation’ refers to situations in which the productive use of natural resources is linked to the promotion of economic growth — strengthening local livelihoods and encouragement of environmental conservation (Hall, 2004: 21). Within the general approach known as ‘integrated conservation and development’ (*ProAmbiente*, 2005), productive conservation is based on the assumption that a significant share of the responsibility for protecting the Amazonian environment should be entrusted to those whose livelihoods depend on its preservation (Hall, 1991, 2004).

The *ProAmbiente* encouragement of more sustainable economic activities has been realised through compensating directly (with credit) or indirectly (with technical assistance) the family-based, small scale producers for clean agricultural practices and related environmental services such as forest conservation and management, reduction of forest fires, maintenance of stream and river margins, soil conservation, recuperation of degraded areas and biodiversity conservation (MMA, 2003: 8). Clean agricultural practices are understood as the eradication of slash and burn as a practice for land clearance. Avoidance of agrochemicals and incentives for organic

production are also elements of clean agricultural practice. According to the *ProAmbiente* project (MMA, 2003: 9), the programme prioritises:

- (a) utilization of systems of production that involve technologies of low environment impact (eradication of technologies of slash and burn for land clearance);
- (b) use of degraded and altered land;
- (c) implantation of alternative systems of land use;
- (d) agroforestry system;
- (e) artisan fishing;
- (f) traditional indigenous practices;
- (g) verticalisation of family-based, rural production.

The *ProAmbiente* concept was formulated in 2000, the proposal defined in July 2003 and it is still in the phase of implementation and consolidation (see Table 1). Bartels (2004)³⁵ has considered the *ProAmbiente* as a good example to understand the mechanisms that promote collaborative planning process.

³⁵ Bartels (2004) has studied the *ProAmbiente* in two poles: Alto Acre (Acre state) and Transamazônica (Pará state).

Table 1

Timeline of the *ProAmbiente's* Construction (2000-2003)

Period	Actions
May 2000	The idea emerged from the FETAGs during the preparatory meeting for ' <i>Grito da Amazônia 2000</i> '.
May – December 2000	Informal process of elaboration of proposal by FETAGs.
January 2001	Partnership between FETAGs, IPAM and FASE. IPAM created the <i>ProAmbiente</i> project inside its Forestry and Community research programme.
March 2001	Workshop promoted by FETAGs with participation of CONTAG, IPAM and FASE and financial support of PDA/MMA, SCA/MMA, and Ford Foundation. The first management committee of the programme defined it.
March - October 2001	Elaboration of initial proposal of <i>ProAmbiente</i> by time defined in the March workshop.
November 2001	First workshop to present and discuss the proposal in Amapá State. It received financial support of Amapá government, MMA, MDA.
December 2001	The <i>ProAmbiente's</i> team took account of suggestions from the Amapá's workshop.
January 2002	The initial proposal approved by the manager committee.
April 2002	Creation of <i>ProAmbiente's</i> Executive Bureau in the Ministry of the Environment.
May – December 2002	Contract of cooperation between FETAGRI and MMA and workshops in the nine states of Legal Amazônia.
September 2002	Contracts of credit: 1) between PRONAF-MDA and IPAM-FASE elaboration of Plans of Sustainable Development to 9 pioneer poles; 2) between MMA and IPAM/FASE for capacity building of beneficiaries and NGO staff to carry out the programme.
April 2003	Presentation of final proposal to head of Ministry of the Environment.
June 2003	Inclusion of the <i>ProAmbiente</i> in the Federal Plan through SDS/MMA. Transformation into experimental public policy.
From July 2003	Implementation and consolidation of its actions in the pioneer poles.
From 2004	Participatory evaluations of programme actions and results achieved in the poles in advanced phase.
2005	Certification (<i>certificação</i>) from participatory method; creation and fulfilment of the 'Community Agreement' (<i>Acordo Comunitário</i>).
2006	Creation of Environmental Service Funds.

Source: MMA, 2003

The *ProAmbiente* reallocated part of FNO and PRONAF resources to deal with the costs of agricultural production and related technical projects, while allowing for the creation of a new fund – Fundo de Serviços Ambientais - FSA (Environmental Service Funds) to pay off debts incurred by family-based and small-scale producers from protecting or restoring the environment in their area and/or plot. The present FNO and PRONAF schemes prioritise the costs of production and labour and do not include the costs of maintenance of the environment inside a sustainable productive system. Thus, the *ProAmbiente* suggests a change of such methods in transforming agricultural credit into environmental credit linked to a programme of sustainable development and sustainable livelihoods (MMA, 2003: 25). The *FSA* has been formed³⁶ by resources from the federal government budgets to secure its principal aims, and other sources of resources to be negotiated with private organisations and national and international institutions. However, external organisations should maintain its priorities and interests in *ProAmbiente* principles for social interests as well as for public policy.

Payment for environmental services is a central element of the *ProAmbiente* (MMA, 2003; MMA, 2005b). Family-based, small-scale producers have maintained credit for their production initially through a system of credit (FNO and PRONAF) and later from the *FSA*. The evaluation of environmental services is broken up into two phases. Firstly, there is a ‘participatory certification’ (*certificação participativa*), which requires each family involved in the programme to evaluate and certify each other through proxy indicators (MMA, 2005b: 11). These include environmental services related to water, biodiversity, soils and flammability (op. cit.). The participatory certification phase views an evaluation on the creation and fulfilment of

³⁶ Up to September 2005 (the time when field work was carried out) the fund was not formed.

a Communitarian Agreement (*Acordo Comunitário*) as a key issue. This agreement is elaborated more in the initial implementation phase of the programme in each community.

All families must have a Plano de Utilização da Unidade de Produção – PU (Land Use Plan) in their unit of production (and follow the principles and values of the *ProAmbiente*. PU is a family-based, small-scale plan that indicates changes in the use of land and in the process of production (MMA, 2005a: 4). The plan is an essential element for facilitated credit. The family PUs of a same pole/area must be integrated to form a Territorial Plan (*Plano Territorial*), which takes account of local diagnosis based on local knowledge about the environment and processes of production. The territorial plan is also called a Plano de Desenvolvimento Sustentável do Pólo - PDSP (Pole Sustainable Development Plan). According to the *ProAmbiente* project (MMA, 2003), under the programme model of facilitated credit there is:

- (a) easier access to FNO credit and other sources of credit;
- (b) more time for debit payment because of larger time-scales needed for sustainable investments;
- (c) access to credit from the *Environmental Fund* to bank tax and income, technical assistance, social organisation and total payment of maintenance system costs (such as carbon sequestration, soil recovery and hydrologic system issues).

Secondly, an ‘external certification’ is required. This consists of an audit to be done by an external organisation contracted by the Ministry of the Environment to monitor environmental components. Avoided deforestation and carbon sequestration is assessed by measuring biomass through the use of satellite imagery from an

established baseline (based on a composite image from over several years) (MMA, 2003: 27). If environmental services are proven, the family-based, small-scale rural producers receive an Environmental Certification' (*Certificação Ambiental*) and the right to a monthly payment for their contributions to protect and/or restore the environment on behalf of national and international interests (MMA, 2005b).

The key elements of the programme are social relations with an emphasis on people's participation in the local diagnosis, elaboration of a territorial plan, planning land use and decision making and also consolidating local associations. The social pattern of *ProAmbiente* entails putting value on the customs, experiences and culture of the local populations; asserting that people's involvement is independent of race, religion and gender.

Apart from the concept of integrated planning of the use and conservation of natural resources, the *ProAmbiente* model also works with the concept of territory. This concept consists in defining an imaginary bordered territory (pole) that differs from a political territorial division (*município*). A pole, for example, may cover parts of two, three or more *municípios*. Each pole needs a territory plan (Pole Sustainable Development Plan) that may contain some differences to the rural planning of each *município*.

The initial phase of the *ProAmbiente* involves 12 pioneering poles. As a regional programme, the *ProAmbiente* covers all nine states of the Legal Amazonia Region³⁷ (*Amazônia legal*). The twelve poles cover the distinct socio-cultural diversity of Amazônia. Each pole was planned to cover between 250 to 500 families, however

³⁷ Brazil's Legal Amazonia Region covers 60% of the national territory.

the number of families can be more, or less, according to each specific pole. During field work research, three poles were in the implementation phase and nine were in the consolidation phase. The following table illustrates the poles and their phases.

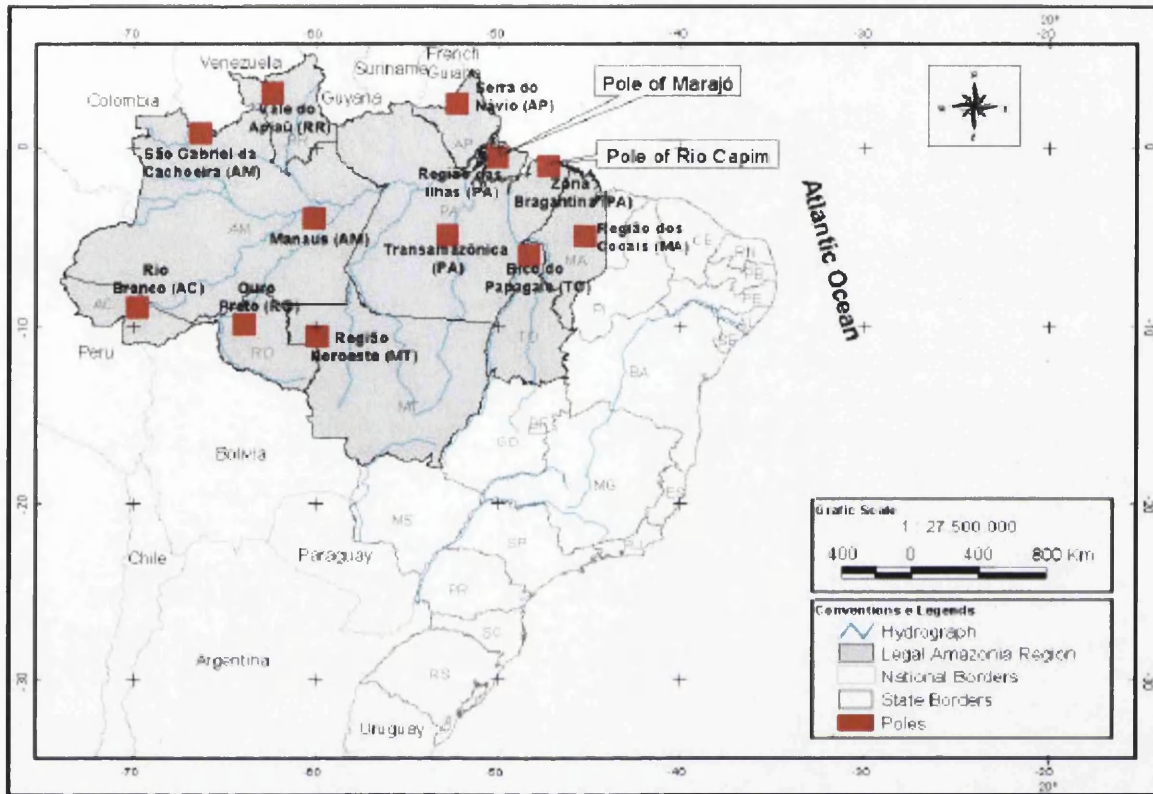
Table 2
Pioneer Areas of the *ProAmbiente* Programme

Initial Phase		Advanced Phase	
Pole	State	Pole	State
Marajo Island	Pará	Xapuri	Acre
Cocais Region	Maranhão	Ouro Preto D'oeste	Rondônia
São Gabriel da Cachoeira	Amazonas	North-east of Mato Grosso	Mato Grosso
		Bico do Papagaio	Tocantins
		North-east of Pará	Pará
		Transamazônica roadway	Pará
		Apiau Region	Roraima
		Laranjal do Jari	Amapá
		Manaus	Amazonas

Source: MMA, 2005a

Map 1

Geographical Distribution of the Poles in Brazilian Amazônia



Source: MMA, 2003

The poles that are in advanced phase are agriculture based. The programme initially focused on agriculture, as it was the only component of the rural sector. They were the first poles of the programme because, according to former managers, they were politically organised.

(...) the political criterion (...) yes, it was a great criterion to identify and to define some poles (...) the poles' success is linked to solid political organisations (...).³⁸

³⁸ Interview with a former manager of the *ProAmbiente*, September 2005.

Demands from other social groups to take part in the programme such as fishermen and indigenous peoples induced the *ProAmbiente* staff to re-evaluate its focus. Thus, the poles of Ilha do Marajó, Região dos Cocais and São Gabriel da Cachoeira were included in the programme after an evaluation stating that the initial phase of the *ProAmbiente* only focused on agriculture-based areas. Thus, Ilha do Marajó included a fishing area, *São Gabriel da Cachoeira* an indigenous area and *Região dos Cocais* a *quilombo*³⁹ area.

(...) there were two categories that were outside of the process, these were the indigenous people and the fishermen (...) the programme [staff] viewed it as important to incorporate them (...) later we found that the indigenous population do not traditionally work with credit (...).⁴⁰

The present system of poles linked with political orientations adds credence to the idea of a community based on political networks rather than on natural communities. The importance of recognising the active involvement of people and organisations in the generation and reproduction of local social networks avoids an emphasis on the natural community and adds value to political participation.

As the origin of the model of the *ProAmbiente* emerged from inside social movements, political participation in every part of the programme cannot be dismissed. The project attempts to link the historically marginalised, socially excluded, rural groups more effectively to the mainstream of community development. From the social movements' perspective, the *ProAmbiente* is a way to empower people to be the main agent in the improvement of their own livelihoods.

³⁹ *Quilombo* are areas where the population is formed almost exclusively from the black people descended from slaves.

⁴⁰ Interview with former manager of the *ProAmbiente*, August 2004.

The *ProAmbiente* Structure

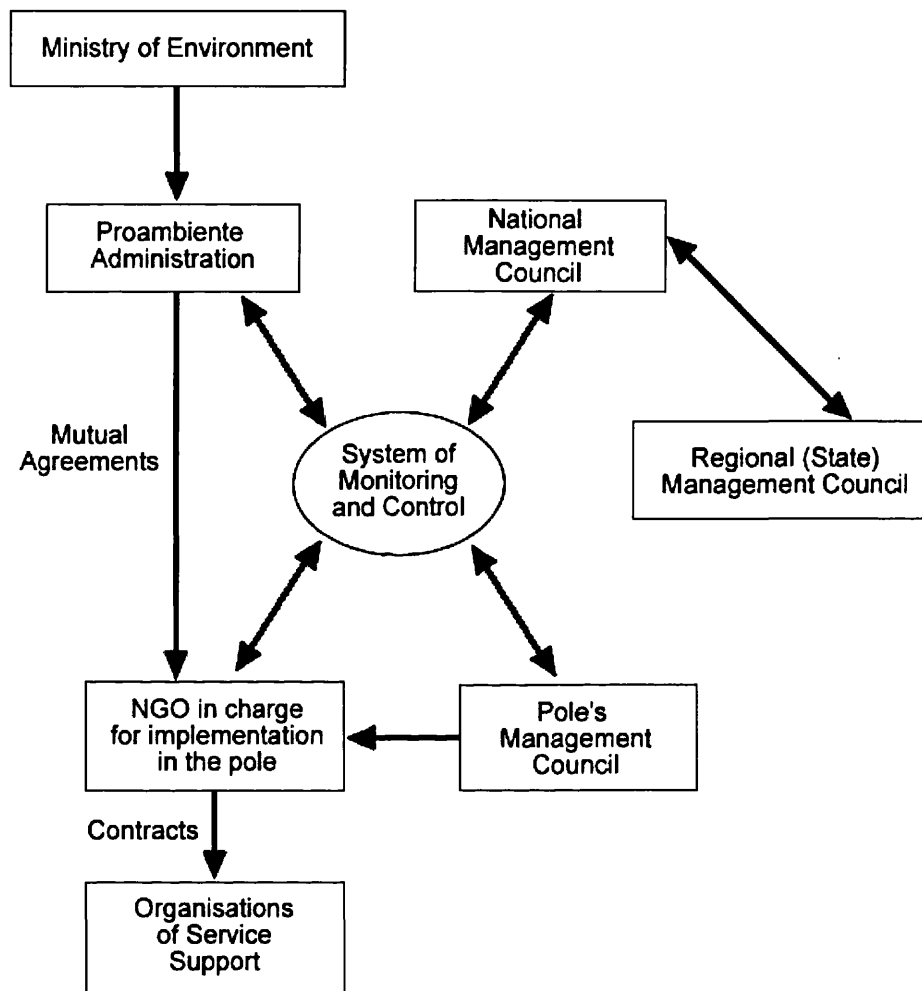
Management and Social Control

Under the principles of democratisation, decentralisation and social control the structure of decision making is complex. It involves board committees (*conselhos gestores*) at national, regional (state) and pole levels. The main role of board committees is to promote social participation of different agents involved in the programme and to offer social control of *ProAmbiente* actions and results. The National Management Council (Conselho Gestor Nacional – CONGEN) is the highest political and administrative decision making institution; the Regional (state) Management Council (Conselho Gestor Estadual – CONGES) restricts its decision making at regional level; and the Pole's Management Council (Conselho Gestor dos Pólos – CONGEP) takes administrative decision making at pole level (see figure 2).

The structure of management is composed of a central management department (*unidade central de gerenciamento*) called the *Gerência do ProAmbiente*, a section of monitoring and control (*Coordenadoria de Acompanhamento e Controle*) and executive pole organisations (*Entidades Executoras dos Pólos*). The *Gerência do ProAmbiente* is part of the Ministry of the Environment and its main duty is to carry out the technical implementation of the programme. The section of monitoring and control is responsible for a data base system. This system is composed of data produced by governmental and non-governmental research organisations and also from NGOs that work in the field. The aim of the system is to provide the *Gerência do ProAmbiente* with relevant data for decision making. The executive pole organisations are local NGOs as defined by CONGEP to carry out the programme's activities at pole level.

Figure 2

ProAmbiente's Structure of Decision Making, Social Control and Management



Source: adapted from MMA, 2005a

Sources of Funding

The *ProAmbiente* is funded from three sources. These are the *Fundo Socioambiental* (Socio-environmental Fund), the *Fundo de Apoio* (Support Fund) and the *Crédito Produtivo Opcional* (Optional Productive Credit). The first fund is exclusively for the payment of environmental services. The second fund is to maintain programme activities. These activities involve the management of the *Gerência do ProAmbiente*, management of the poles, capacity building for social organisations, expenses for local non-governmental organisations for technical assistance in the poles, and payment of audits to monitor and certify environmental services. The final fund is to supply credit for technical production systems that need more financing than is available to beneficiaries from the programme itself.

Beneficiaries

The beneficiaries of the *ProAmbiente* must meet four basic characteristics:

- (1) use predominantly family-based labour (except during some typical harvests);
- (2) income limited to R\$30,000.00 (around US \$ 14,066.68) per year (80% of which must be the result of rural production);
- (3) permanent residence in the area (minimum of 1 year);
- (4) use no more than four 'plots of land' (*módulos fiscais*). For fishermen, this last requirement is a special type of fishing equipment (*apetrechos de pesca*). This equipment cannot cause any irreversible impact on fish stocks. The indigenous people who live in officially designated indigenous areas do not need to meet these requirements.

Additionally, grassroots organisations (local associations and cooperatives) may also be beneficiaries if they are formally constituted for more than six months, have a minimum of twenty members and represent people that live in the poles. The main contraction is that in reality, US\$14,066.68 is considered a high annual family income in rural Para. The average monthly income in the communities studied is between US\$40.56 to US\$58.54.

Rules of *Crédito Produtivo Opcional* (Optional Productive Credit)

The Optional Productive Credit aims to support the activities planned in the PDSP and PU and is formed by resources from FNO. The rural producer may have access to Optional Productive Credit in two forms, one from an application from his/her association and the other from his/her own application. However, in both cases the producer cannot request credit for cattle-ranching (beef production) and for agriculture based on transgenic seeds and agrochemicals. The intermediary NGOs that work in the pole should support the projects for credit access. However, the final decision about credit access comes from the Bank of Amazônia.

The Optional Productive Credit was modelled to reach three categories of producers:

- (a) people located in settled areas (*areas de assentamento*);
- (b) families with annual incomes less than R\$15,000.00 (around US \$7,033.34);
- (c) families with annual incomes between R\$15,000.00 (US \$7,033.34) and R\$30,000.00 (US \$14,066.68).

Organisation of *Fundo de Serviços Ambientais* - FSA (Environmental Service Fund)

As stated earlier, the FSA is the main fund to pay rural producers for their work in environment conservation for the society as a whole. This fund is managed by the *Gerência do ProAmbiente* and regulated according to the National Board Committee (CONGEN).

The *ProAmbiente* defines environmental services as 'qualitative changes of the production system' from use of sustainable plans to land exploitation in the units of production as well as in the pole as a whole. Such changes generate costs for family-based, small-scale rural producers and the *ProAmbiente* considers the expenses of the entire society and not only those of the rural producer.

The amount to be paid is defined according to additional costs applied to minimise risks of environmental impact and that is not incorporated in the final price of production, described in the theory of Ecologic-Economy as costs of opportunity in application of environmental services. In the *ProAmbiente*, the costs of opportunity have been preliminarily calculated as half the national minimum wage per month (around R\$175, 00 [US \$82.06] per month). The *ProAmbiente's* beneficiaries must fulfil the programme's technical requirements in order to be remunerated for their environmental services. To evaluate requirements, the programme established indicators to monitor targets. Two types of indicators monitor environmental services:

- (1) environmental services with direct indicators;
- (2) environmental services with indirect indicators.

Table 3

Environmental Services Indicators

Environmental Services with:	Indicators	Forms of Measurement
Direct Indicators	Deforestation avoided and sequestration of carbon.	Biomass (50% of dry biomass = Carbon). Collective evaluation.
Indirect Indicators	Water, soil, biodiversity and reduction of fire risk.	Fulfilment of requirements for certification of environmental services. It is based on the Communitarian Agreement (<i>Acordo Comunitário</i>). Individual and collective evaluation.

Source: MMA, 2005b

The *Gerência do ProAmbiente* takes decisions about beneficiaries' payment based on the results of the indicators and the audit that will be carried by external organisations (MMA, 2005b). In cases of suspension of payment to a family, it does not mean that the family are excluded from the programme. It means that this family did not meet the programme requirements and that a new evaluation will be carried out in the subsequent year. The Communitarian Agreement should be renewed every year in order to establish new targets.

The resources of the FSA are composed of two sets of sources, one from the federal government budget (fixed source) and the other from private and public, national and international organisations (complementary source). The former composes the minimum quote and is formed by resources from the MMA and the *Banco Nacional de Desenvolvimento Econômico e Social* – BNDES (National Bank for Social and Economic Development). The complementary funds normally come from organisations with social and environmental responsibilities. These organisations, however, are not allowed to propose or define the creation of new poles and/or indicate areas for the application of resources. As regards the complementary funds,

the *ProAmbiente* advocates the creation of an environmental tax (*taxas ambientais*) called Ecotax (*Ecotaxas*) and access to other funds as follows:

Table 4
Source of Complementary Funds

Type of Tax or Source	Business or Organisation	Reasons
Ecotax	Petrol companies and manufacturers of cars, buses, motorbikes and tractors.	Emission of carbon by factories and products.
Ecotax	Minerals, coal exploratory companies.	Co-responsibility for carbon emissions.
Ecotax	Wood exploration companies.	Deforestation and reduction of carbon stock.
Ecotax	Hydroelectric companies.	They cause physical and chemical alterations in the hydrological system.
Ecotax	Chemical products companies.	Prejudicial to water, soil and biodiversity as a whole.
Ecotax	Paper and cellulose companies.	Increased risk of fire.
Prototype Carbon Fund and Bio Carbon Fund	World Bank and PPG7.	Industrialised and developed countries are the most responsible for global warming.
Rural Territory Taxation	Regional and federal government.	Social commitments.
Water Taxation	National Water Agency.	Social commitments.
Others	Others.	Commitment to the environment.

Source: MMA, 2003

Conclusion

This chapter provided a view of the *ProAmbiente* programme. It examined the *ProAmbiente*'s background, concept, model and structure of management. The aim of this chapter was to demonstrate the history of the programme and to expand on its amplitude and complexity.

The chapter shows that the history of the *ProAmbiente* is linked to three important factors. Although these factors are examined separately they are intrinsically linked.

These include the environmental policy changes during the 1990s; the rural social movements and its influence on change; the changes of national and regional policies of credit. These factors are in turn linked to previous issues of national policy for Amazonian development.

The policy of occupation of Amazônia with programmes of colonisation, settlements (*assentamentos*), and fiscal incentives for agribusiness during the 1960s and 1970s were the main causes of social and environmental disruption in the region. These events were later on to strengthen the social movement there. These social movements, which firstly confronted governments in requesting an increased focus on land distribution, infrastructure and credit, and later proposals of policy changes were the greatest actors in the establishment of the *ProAmbiente*. One of the reasons for considering the *ProAmbiente* as an innovative programme is this bottom-up form of its origins.

The social movement, however, was not unique in its influence on the *ProAmbiente*. Its engagement with intermediaries such as NGOs linked to national and international bodies within social and environment concerns was fundamental in defining the concept of productive conservation and in the approach of integrated conservation and development. Such concepts, which emerged from links between the needs of local producers and the interests of environmental organisations, represented significant changes in the paradigm of production of family-based, small-scale rural producers. Certainly, without linking with external actors the social movement alone would not have the resources and the power to develop the idea of productive conservation.

However, links with environmental organisations including the Ministry of the Environment have overemphasised the environmental aspects in the *ProAmbiente* scheme. If on the one hand, the design has been well developed as regards environment conservation, on the other hand the programme has failed to take account of basic social issues such as land ownership, social services infrastructure and the family minimum wage. As the *ProAmbiente* is highly concerned with the 'cost of opportunity in application of environmental services', it has placed more attention on the environment than on sustainable livelihoods. The costing of R\$175, 00 (US \$82.06)⁴¹ (half the national minimum wage) per family is certainly insufficient to cover the costs of the basic needs of a family of five people (according to IBGE, the average size of a family in the region is five people).

If between the programme's concept of social inclusion is the capacity of consumption and access to two basic needs of health and education (the discussion of peoples' needs and priorities will be in Chapter Seven), then surely the programme is yet to achieve these objectives. The *ProAmbiente* assumes that the capacity of consumption will occur automatically in market access and that health and education are part of local government duties. In taking such assumptions, the programme shirks its responsibilities, some of the basic premises of social inclusion.

The costing for the environmental service of each family is predetermined, suggesting that the programme is not taking into account the variables that may occur between families, communities and poles. For example, there is always an element of variability in the number of people in each family; there is always a variable in a

⁴¹ The costing of RS 175,00 (US \$82.06) is based on the Brazilian national wage of RS 350,00 monthly (US \$164.12) in May 2006.

community's market access and there are always different needs and priorities between the poles.

Taking an economic perspective, the market for organic products in developing countries is not already formed. As the costs of production of clean technology are higher than the costs of traditional production (using agrochemicals), its final price is also higher causing some difficulties in finding markets. The cost of economic opportunity, therefore, should be remunerated according to this cost and not based on arbitrary criteria.

Additionally, the poor economic infrastructure (e.g. local road conditions and market accessibility) has elevated the final price of production. It suggests that without the improvement of the economic infrastructure to facilitate market access and in decreasing the costs of production, the rural producer involved in the programme may take significant risks with access to optional credit. It means that without a link between credit for rural producers and credit for local government to create a basic economic infrastructure, the programme may fail in the more basic economic premises.

The *ProAmbiente* is innovative both in its origins (it was proposed by the producers themselves) and because it is in the first instances a market-based economic instrument (credit) used to modify the behaviour of family-based small-scale producers to help contain deforestation. However, despite its positive potential, it still needs more adjustments so as to be effective in both social and economic terms.

The effectiveness of the *ProAmbiente* will ultimately depend on a variety of factors. Among these factors is a solid technical project that takes into account the economic situation of the Amazon, the support of local governments through improvements in infrastructure in each pilot area, development of niche markets for these environmentally responsible products, and improvement of basic rural infrastructure (especially health and education) to help retain families in rural areas. Without attention to such issues the *ProAmbiente* will still be unbalanced in favour of the environment with significant problems in its economic growth and social inclusion aims.

Chapter Four

The Research Methodology

Introduction

The thesis seeks to demonstrate how a state-sponsored development programme interacts with, and impacts on local communities while putting the communities' priorities first. Research for the thesis is based on a methodological framework with three levels of analysis namely, the macro-level (policy), the intermediary-level (NGOs creating the space for interaction between federal government and communities), and the local-level (communities). This thesis focuses on:

- (a) factors that influence the building of a political space of interaction between federal government and local communities;
- (b) role played by intermediary NGOs to link a governmental programme with local communities;
- (c) dynamics of the relationship between development agencies, individuals, community leaders and other actors within local spaces.

The *ProAmbiente* was chosen as the case study for this thesis because it is the first development programme carried out by the Brazilian federal government to use participatory approaches to incorporate rural communities' demands, culture and knowledge in Amazonia. It is also the first programme from the federal Brazilian government that has been transformed into public policy by encouraging rural people's participation in managing natural resources and incorporating issues of conservation and production. The *ProAmbiente* was chosen for assessment as it

incorporates grassroots' demands into national policy (and adapts national policy for local communities) in Brazilian Amazonia. What is more, it links government and local communities together in its use of participatory approaches that include the culture and knowledge of the local communities.

As presented in Chapter Three, the *ProAmbiente* programme encompasses twelve areas of Amazonia that are defined as poles within the *ProAmbiente* (see map 1). This research focuses particularly on the experience of the *ProAmbiente* in the state of Pará. The state of Pará was chosen because it was selected by the Brazilian government as the first location for the introduction of the *ProAmbiente* programme. This had been partially aided by the activities of the social movements together with NGOs that had worked on Pará's Transamazônica roadway and who had proposed new ideas of reconciliation for the social conflicts and environmental issues that later on framed the *ProAmbiente*. This fundamental decision was reinforced by the personal interests of this thesis's author who was born in Pará, and has lived and worked there.

Within Pará, the poles selected were Marajó and Rio Capim (the reasons for choosing these poles will be explained further in this chapter). The poles of Marajó and Rio Capim have distinct social, cultural and environmental characteristics that demonstrate the diversity of Pará State (the profile of Pará State and the poles of Marajó and Rio Capim are explained further).

In Marajó, the field work research was conducted in the communities of Pedral, Pesqueiro and Cajaúna located in the *município* of Soure. In Rio Capim, the field

work research was done in the communities of Vila do Galho, Jauíra and Cabo Verde within *município* of Concórdia do Pará.

Table 5
Field Work Research Sites

Pole	<i>Municípios</i>	Communities
Marajó	Soure	Pedral
		Pesqueiro
		Cajaúna
Rio Capim	Concórdia do Pará	Vila do Galho
		Jauíra
		Cabo Verde

Source: Field Work

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section contains a brief profile of the Pará State, of the poles of Marajó and Rio Capim within the *municípios* of Soure and Concórdia do Pará. The first section also looks at the communities chosen and explains the reasons for their selection. The second section presents the conceptual framework for data collection and explains the methods of data gathering that were applied.

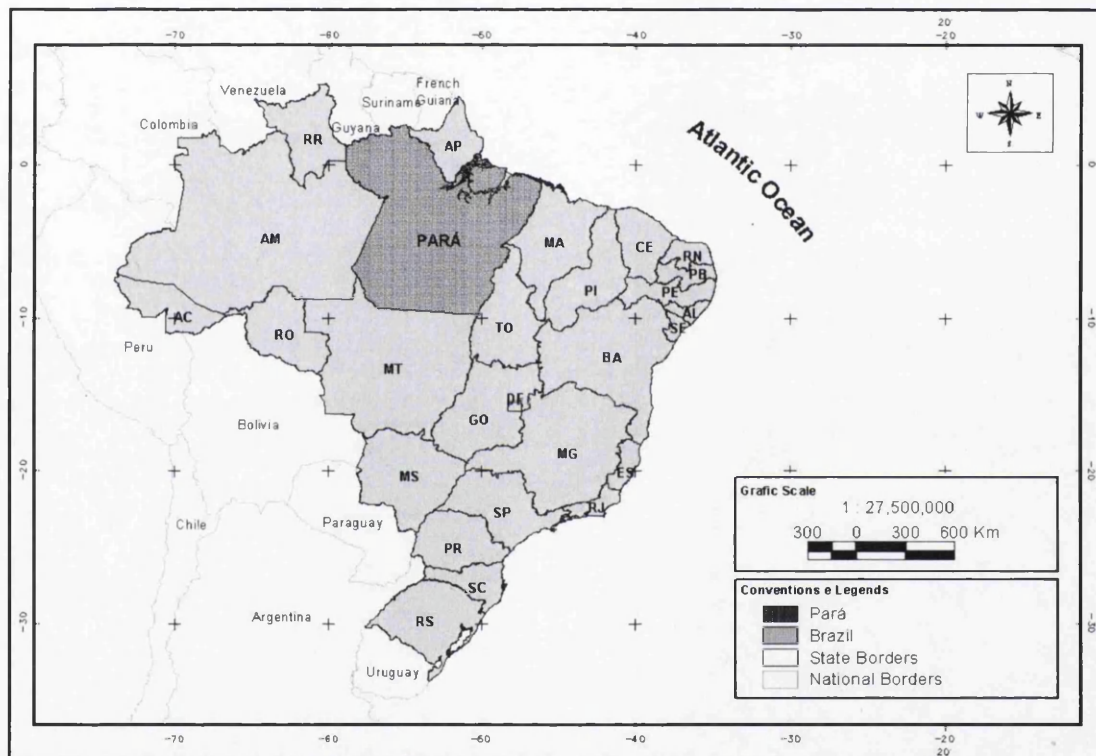
Profile of Study Areas

Pará State

Pará is located in the north of Brazil. To its north, it borders Guyana, Suriname and the Brazilian state of Amapá; to the north-east is the Atlantic Ocean; to the east are the Brazilian states of Maranhão and Tocantins; to the south is the state of Mato Grosso; and to the west, is the state of Amazonas. The total area of the state is 1,248,042 km² and this area corresponds to 16.66% of the total area of the country. Pará is the second largest state in Brazil with 143 *municípios*. According to the last Brazilian official census, the population of Pará was 6,192,307 million people with about 4.96 people per km² (IBGE, 2000). This population density is lower than the

Brazilian average of 19.92 people per km². The urban population increased at an annual rate of 4.71% between 1991 and 2000 (IBGE, 2000) and the rural population decreased from 2.35 million from 1991 to 2.07 million in 2000 (IBGE, 2000). These figures demonstrate a continuous process of migration from rural to urban areas.

Map 2
Pará State in Brazil



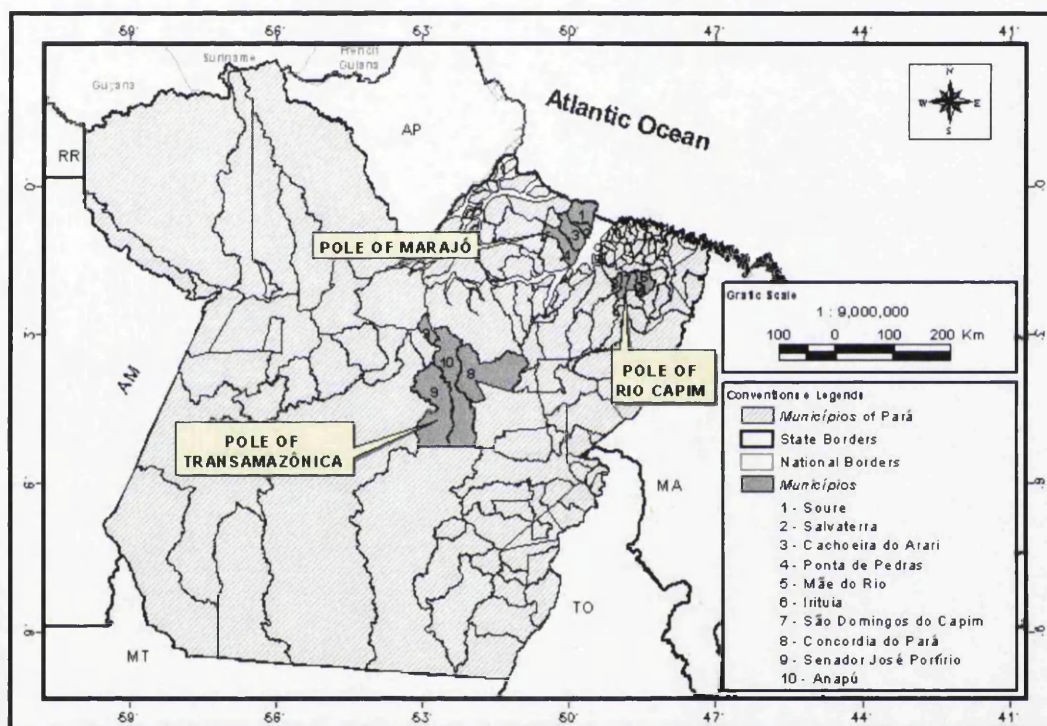
Source: IBGE, 2000

***ProAmbiente* in Pará State**

In Pará, the *ProAmbiente* programme has three poles: (1) Transamazônica, (2) Zona Bragantina/Nordeste Paraense (north-east of Pará) (also called Rio Capim pole) and (3) Região das Ilhas (also called Marajó Island pole). The *ProAmbiente* works on the concept of the pole. The pole is an imaginary circumscribed area that covers two,

three or more *municípios* with similar geographical and environmental composition and social issues. A pole is different from a *município*, which is the lowest political division of territory in Brazil.⁴²

Map 3
***ProAmbiente* Poles in Pará State**



Source: IBGE, 2000

⁴² The political division of Brazil has three levels: federal, state and *município*.

The Pole of Marajó (Região das Ilhas – Island region) and the *Município* of

Soure

Marajó is the biggest island in Brazilian Amazonia. It is 183 miles (295 km) long and 124 miles (200 km) wide, with an area of 18,519 square miles (47,964 km²). It includes 16 *municípios*⁴³ (IBGE, 2000). Marajó has large rivers – the Marajó-Acú, the Anajás and the Arari and these have smaller tributaries (the Anabijú, the Atua, the Charapucu, the Mocões, the Paracauari and others). The rivers of Marajó cover around 7.6% of Pará's territory and 5.7% of the state population live in their environs (op. cit.).

The traditional economy of Marajó is based on cattle-ranching with increasing numbers of cows and buffalos. This activity is predominantly developed by large farms. Taking the rural population into account, official statistics demonstrate that fishing (*pesca artesanal*) is the main economic activity (IBGE, 1996). The Pará Constitution defined Marajó as an environmental protection area (*área de proteção ambiental*). By law there are norms and restriction for the use of the land by the private sector. According to the Pará Constitution, an environmental protection area is formed by land that contains biotic, non-biotic, esthetical and cultural attributes that are important to the quality of life and welfare of the human population. The aim of an environmental protection area is to manage the use of land and to promote sustainable use of natural resources.

Also in Marajó, in the *município* of Soure, the federal government created a Reserva Extrativista de Marinha - RESEX (Marine Reserve of Extraction of Natural

⁴³ Marajó Island comprises the municipalities of Afuá, Anajás, Bagre, Breves, Cachoeira do Arari, Chaves, Curralinho, Gurupá, Melgaco, Muaná, Pontas de Pedras, Portel, Salvaterra, Santa Cruz do Arari, São Sebastião da Boa Vista and Soure (www.sepof.pa.gov/mesorregião).

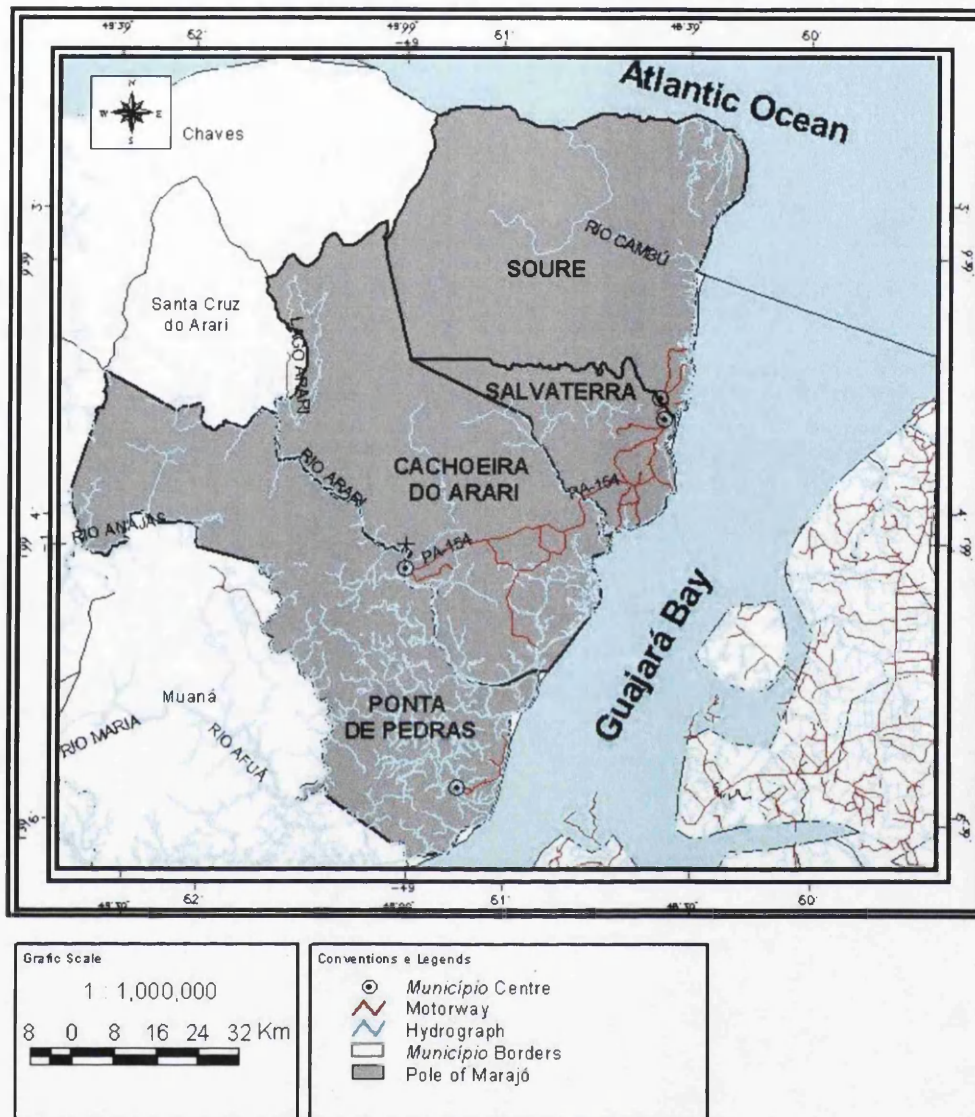
Vegetation) called Resex Maruanazes⁴⁴ that covers two floodplain areas. The aim of the marine reserve is to control the exploitation of the areas by the rural communities. This uses a community management approach for the conservation of natural resources.

Although there are 16 *municípios* in Marajó, the *ProAmbiente* works with only four *municípios*: Soure, Salvaterra, Pontas de Pedras and Cachoeira do Arari.

⁴⁴ The origin of the reserve's name comes from the indigenous tribe the Maruanazes. This tribe was part of the indigenous group called the Aruans.

Map 4

Municípios in the Pole of Marajó



Source: IBGE, 2000

Table 6

Geographical Configuration of *Municípios* in the Pole of Marajó

Municípios	Area km²	Urban Population %	Rural Population %	Total Population	Demographic Density Persons/km²	Human Development Index – HDI
Soure	3,513	87	13	19,958	5.68	0.723
Salvaterra	1,044	57	43	15,118	14.48	0.715
Pontas de Pedra	3,365	46	54	18,594	5.52	0.652
Cachoeira do Arari	3,102	37	63	15,783	5.08	0.680

Source: IBGE, 2000

Soure is one of the oldest *municípios* in Pará. It was created in 1847 and is 87 km from Belém, the capital of Pará. The only access to Soure from Belém or other Marajó *municípios* is by ship and ferryboat with a journey time that varies from three to five hours. Soure has a surface area of 3,513 km², which is 0.2815% of the total area of Pará. Soure's population is estimated at 19,958 inhabitants with 87% in urban areas and 13% in rural zones (IBGE, 2000). The population density is 5.68 inhabitants per km².

According to the SEBRAE (2000), 41.95% of Soure's population is poor (income below US \$ 38.41 per month), of which 31.54% are indigenous peoples (income below US \$18.95 per month). The per capita income in Soure is US \$ 58.54. Cattle-ranching of cows and buffalos, vegetable cultivation and fishing are the most important economic activities in the *município*.

Pole of Rio Capim and the *Município* of Concórdia do Pará

The pole of Rio Capim is located in the north-east region of Pará. This region contains 49 *municípios* in approximately 135,000 km², 10.6% of Pará's total area. According to the IBGE (2000), the 49 *municípios* of the north-east region have a

population of 1,472,775 inhabitants, which is 23% of Pará's total population. This region is the second most populated region of Pará with 17.71 inhabitants per km².

One of the most significant markers of the north-east region is land occupation. From the 1930s to 1980s, the region experienced significant surges in immigration, both spontaneous and officially-sponsored. For example, the north-east population increased significantly in the 1950s when the Belém–Brasília highway was built. The policy of people settlement carried out by military government from the 1970s onwards enlarged the population, increased short-lived agricultural production (crops, maize, beans, manioc and others) and intensified land degradation.

The *ProAmbiente* defined the pole of Rio Capim as the *municípios* of Concórdia do Pará, Irituia, Mãe do Rio and São Domingos do Capim. The population of the areas covered in this pole is approximately 104,230 inhabitants, distributed between 41,289 inhabitants in urban areas and 62,941 inhabitants in rural areas (IBGE, 2000). Despite an intensive migratory movement from the rural to urban areas that has characterised Pará in the last two decades, the area chosen by the *ProAmbiente* programme covers an area where roughly 60% of the population live in rural areas (IBGE, 2000).

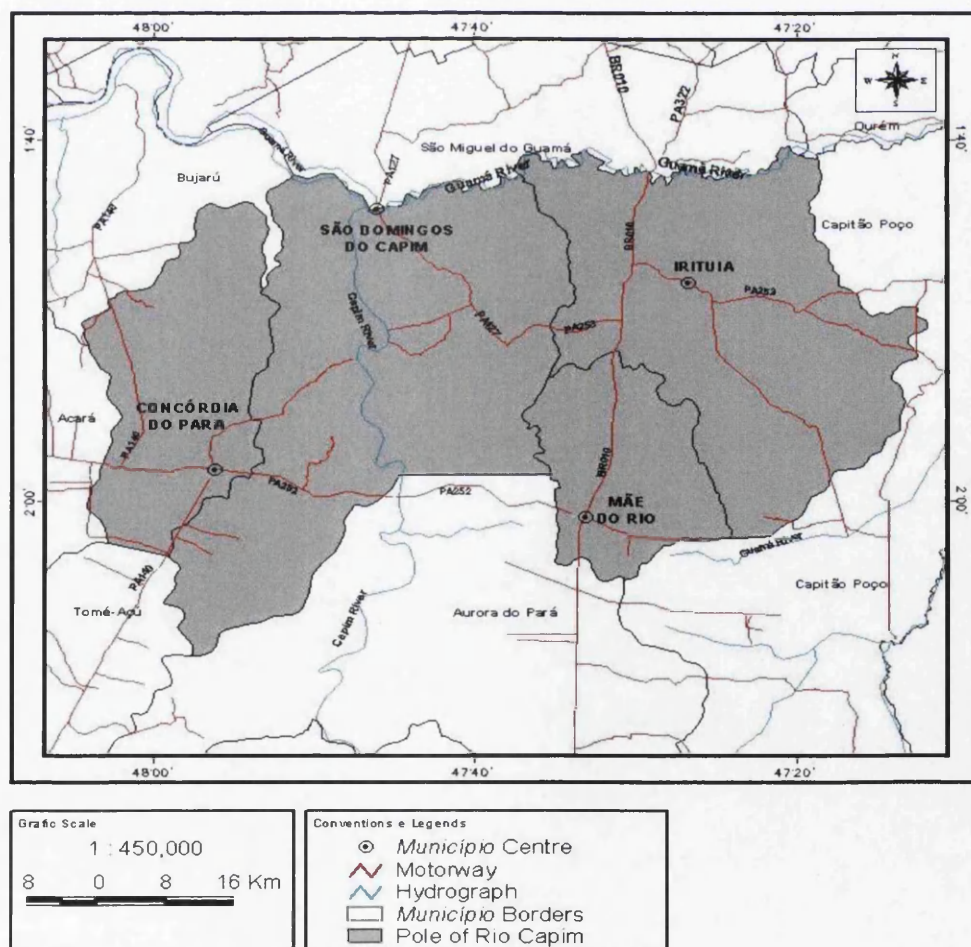
Table 7

Geographical Configuration of *Municípios* in the Pole of Rio Capim

Municípios	Area km²	Urban Population %	Rural Population %	Total Population	Demographic Density Persons/km²	Human Development Index - HDI
São Domingos do Capim	1,684	21.44	78.55	27,405	16.20	0.625
Irituia	1,378	19.09	80.90	30,518	22.05	0.674
Concórdia do Pará	707	51.74	48.21	20,965	29.49	0.659
Mãe do Rio	469	73.91	26.08	25,351	53.81	0.697

Source: IBGE, 2000

Map 5

Municípios in the Pole of Rio Capim

Source: IBGE, 2000

The *município* of Concórdia do Pará is located in the north-east of Pará. The centre of the *município* is located at the intersection of two highways, the PA152 and the PA-140. It is 85 km from Belém. The history of Concórdia do Pará is connected with the land occupation in the Pará's north-east region where the construction of the highways had a large influence.

Concórdia do Pará was created in 1989 from the political emancipation of the *município* of Bujaru. It covers an area of 691 km² which is 0.0554% of Pará's territory. Concórdia do Pará has a population of 20,956 inhabitants, of which 51.77% are located in urban areas and 48.23% in rural zones (IBGE, 2000). According to the SEBRAE (2000), 52.23% of Concórdia do Pará's population are poor (income below US \$38.41 per month), 41.28% are indigenous peoples (income below US \$18.95 per month). The per capita income in Concórdia do Pará is US \$40.56. Small-scale agriculture and extraction of natural vegetation are the most important economic activities in the *município*. Cattle-ranching and commerce are also part of the *município* economy, however they are less significant. Recent investment in the agro-industry sector such as the mechanization of crops and production of manioc flour has led to the extension of urban areas. According to documentation on Concórdia do Pará, vegetation here has a high percentage of secondary succession within a radius of 20 km of the centre of the *município*. Moving further away from the centre of the *município*, it is noted that the percentage of replacement lands (forest to secondary succession) has a higher peak in relation to areas already considered as primary succession before 1991 (Redwood, 1993). This is associated to a more recent colonization and urban expansion of this town.

Selection of Research Sites

The researcher intended to investigate the three poles of the *ProAmbiente* in Pará, Transamazônica, Rio Capim and Marajó. The researcher supposed that a focus on the three areas of the programme could offer a comparative analysis towards the differences and similarities of programme actions in areas of diverse knowledge and cultural characteristic of local communities. However, practical difficulties caused this design to be rejected. The pole of Transamazônica was facing an intense and violent conflict between local people and landowners on issues of land use and occupation. Although this conflict was not new (it is the result of a long history of struggle for land in Amazonia), it became more serious with the murder of an American nun (Dorothy Stang) who worked with landless, rural workers in the *município* of Anapú,⁴⁵ one of the key *ProAmbiente municípios* in Transamazônica. Therefore, in spite of the importance of Transamazônica in analysing the *ProAmbiente* in its advanced phase, for security reasons this option was rejected⁴⁶. This was the first change in the initial research design.

However, the researcher did not find that this change substantially affected the research plan. According to *ProAmbiente* managers in the Ministry of the Environment, the *ProAmbiente's* actions broke down during the land conflicts in Transamazônica. As the researcher was interested in analysing the programme in action, the exclusion of Transamazônica pole did not affect the research aims because *ProAmbiente's* activities there had ceased. Additionally, the majority of the *ProAmbiente's* work was concentrated in the Rio Capim pole. This was significant in defining the Rio Capim pole as the essential site to assess the *ProAmbiente* in action

⁴⁵ Anapú is the *município* most affected by the conflict, mainly due to areas of intense deforestation, slave labour and expulsion of local people from their lands.

⁴⁶ This decision was done by the researcher from the advices of her supervisors.

within its two phases (planning and implementation). As the Rio Capim pole was in an advanced phase of implementation, the researcher viewed the data generated in this pole as significant to relate to the others *ProAmbiente* poles, including that of Transamazônica.

The researcher took the decision to begin investigations in the *municípios* of the pole of Marajó including people from the communities and the NGOs in charge of programme implementation in this area. This decision was taken for practical reasons such as the researcher's knowledge of the area and researcher's contacts with NGO staff in Belém (capital of Pará). These practical reasons were considered important to facilitate access to information and field work. This first phase took place between April and July of 2004.

Thus, the first methodological strategy was put into operation in the pole of Marajó. The first interviews were carried out there with community leaders and NGO managers. These initial unstructured interviews helped to identify the rural organisations where the *ProAmbiente* was establishing contacts. Following this, the researcher visited these selected rural communities: Pedral, Cajaúna and Pesqueiro (located in the *município* of Soure). These communities were selected because according to the NGO staff (FASE) each community was different. The community of Pesqueiro focuses on fishing (medium scale), Pedral focuses on agriculture and fishing and Cajaúna has fishing on a very small scale (sailing boats).

The federal government had incorporated Marajó pole in the pioneer phase of *ProAmbiente*, however, the field work research identified that the activities in this pole had been progressing very slowly, or were almost at the point of breakdown.

The first research conclusion of the methodological design was that comparative analysis of the impact of the programme between the poles would not be possible due to the slowing down of the programme in Marajó.

In spite of the discontinuity of activities in Marajó, the researcher carried out the first phase to identify what the programme expectations were in this pole and how it was included in the process of programme planning. Field work concentrated on unstructured and semi-structured interviews with three community leaders, two heads of NGOs that had links with the programme and another organisation linked to fishing activity (*colônia dos pescadores* – the Fishermen’s Union). The interviews aimed to rebuild the process of incorporation of the communities into the programme. The researcher considered the investigation of these issues satisfactory for the research aims. These interviews generated about 400 pages of tape transcriptions and were important in understanding the interaction between the *ProAmbiente* aims and the local communities’ culture and knowledge. The interviews were also important to rebuild the process of people participation in the *ProAmbiente* planning design in Marajó. As concerns the qualitative research methods, the interviews conducted with community leaders and heads of NGOs allow the researcher to understand their views of issues such as people participation and the incorporation of people’s culture and knowledge in the planning design in Marajó. The main issues concerning people participation were: the recruitment of people from the communities, who participated, how they participated and what roles they played. The issues of incorporation of people’s culture and knowledge were linked to the ways in which local communities deal with natural resources: how people cultivate the land, make use of marine resources for fishing and bring together issues of production, preservation and conservation of natural resources.

At community level, the researcher faced two other issues. Firstly, the programme was almost on the point of breaking down and very little activities were being delivered at community level. The only activity carried out in the communities was an initial participatory rural appraisal carried out by FASE (the NGO selected by the *ProAmbiente* to work in Marajó) for the *ProAmbiente* planning design. Secondly, in spite of the presence of agricultural activities in two of the three communities, the majority of the communities focused on fishing. This means that most members of the communities expend a long time at sea and spend a very short time inside the communities themselves. As the research design for data gathering at community level was based on focus groups and interviews (as will be explained further) these two issues made it impractical to use the focus group method. As similar work had just been done by the FASE within the *ProAmbiente* programme itself, the researcher felt that a new application of these methods would cause difficulties and raise expectations because the programme was not active. This researcher therefore decided to focus on semi-structured interview as the method for data collection. Priority was given to interview community leaders and fishermen that were not in sea at the time of the field work research. Four interviews were carried out with fishermen to triangulate the information generated by the six interviews previously carried out with community leaders and heads of NGOs with links to the programme in Marajó.

At the end of the investigation in the pole of Marajó, the researcher decided to focus exclusively on the field work carried out there to understand the relationship between the *ProAmbiente* and communities in terms of the programme design, incorporation of communities' knowledge and culture and rural people's participation. The

researcher also considered this phase as very important in looking at NGO practices as they are intermediaries between the programme and local people.

Before restarting investigations inside the communities in Rio Capim, the researcher interviewed the principal managers of the programme, in the Ministry of the Environment (federal government), in Brasilia, capital of Brazil. These interviews were fundamental in reinforcing the decision to use the pole of Rio Capim as the main site of investigation in order to examine the impact of the programme at community level. According to Ministry of the Environment staff members, the *ProAmbiente* was being delivered successfully in Rio Capim and it was in an advanced phase.

From the contacts made in Brasilia, the researcher had information about the NGO in charge in the pole of Rio Capim and when it would deliver its activities there. This information enabled the researcher to take decisions to carry out the second phase of her field work when the NGO in question would meet the communities.

The second methodological strategy was carried out between August and November 2005. As stated above, the fieldwork was facilitated by the previous contacts and interviews that the researcher had conducted in the Ministry of the Environment (Brasilia) with the principal staff on the federal programme. These interviews facilitated access to the NGO (FANEP) who were implementing programme activities in the pole of Rio Capim, and also gave access to their respective documents. Additionally, these contacts enabled the researcher to identify the best times to meet the leaders of the communities without disturbing their productive activities.

Selection of the Local Communities in the Pole of Rio Capim

The pole of Rio Capim includes four *municípios*, 23 communities (and one more that has been part of the programme but so far has not been officially incorporated) and 102 families as shown in Table 8.

Table 8
Communities in the Pole of Rio Capim

<i>Municípios</i>	Communities	Number of Families
Concórdia do Pará	Comunidade Vila do Galho, Comunidade Jauíra, P.A. Nova Inácia, Comunidade Ipanema, Comunidade Concórdia do Pará ⁴⁷ and Conduta.	25
Irituia	Araraquara, Brasileira, Candeua, Menino Jesus.	25
São Domingos do Capim	Monte São, Taperussu, Monte Dourado, Catita, Itabocal, Fé em Deus, Boa Viagem.	26
Mãe do Rio	km 40, Vila Fátima, Mãe do Rio, Nova Jerusalém, Cabo Verde.	25
Total	23 communities.	102

Source: MMA, 2005a

Taking into account the distance between the communities themselves and the distance between the residences of the families inside the communities (this is a common characteristic of rural areas in Amazonia), the selection of communities and families to be investigated in depth was also a great challenge. This selection occurred in the field work process and was taken in steps.

Step One

Firstly, the researcher participated in a workshop organised by FANEP. The researcher participation in the workshop aimed to examine one of the mechanisms used by intermediary NGOs to exchange information with rural communities. The

⁴⁷ This community has the same name as the *município*.

aim of the workshop was to discuss the model of the *ProAmbiente*⁴⁸ and to present details of a project called *Projeto de Alternativa ao Desmatamento e Queimadas - PADEQ* (Project for Alternatives to Deforestation and Forest Burning). This workshop was carried out for three full days and the researcher participated as an observer. As a participant observer, the researcher took on the role of a member of the group being observed and participated in the functioning of the group.

In the beginning of workshop, the researcher introduced herself and explained why she was there. She explained her work to *ProAmbiente* staff and community leaders and requested time to apply her research methods to data gathering at the end of workshop. With their agreement, the researcher spent three extra days carrying out group discussions (details of these methods will be discussed further).

Step one generated two types of data. One generated by the researcher participation in the workshop and other generated by the researcher using her own research methods for data gathering. Examples of the first data generated concerned the diversity of the ecosystem in the pole, information on organisations and their relationship with the local production system. The data generated by the researcher's own methodology focused on people's interests in, and expectations of, the *ProAmbiente*, the construction of land distribution maps - the Units of Family Production – UFP (*mapa de Unidade de Produção Familiar* (see figure 5 and 8).

⁴⁸ According to FANEP managers and staff, the model of the *ProAmbiente* is constantly debated and reinforced.

The purpose of this workshop was to enable the researcher to select communities and families to study in-depth. From the workshop it was possible to identify the differences between the communities such as geographic position, relationships between communities, kinship relations, social organisation and cultural characteristic such as slave descendants and *caboclos*. Active participants were also identified in the workshop meetings and from their understandings about the proposal involved in the *ProAmbiente*. Details of the process of data gathering and the impacts of the methods of data gathering are explained further.

Table 9

***Municípios* and Community Participants in Workshops and Research (PRA and Group Discussions)**

Município	Communities	Total of Participants
São Domingos do Capim	Estabocal	1
	Boa Viagem	1
	Fé em Deus	1
	Monte São	1
Mãe do Rio	Santana Piripindeua	1
	Nove Jerusalém	1
	Santa Rita	1
Irituia	Condeixa	1
Concórdia do Pará	Ipanema	2
	Jauíra	4
	Conduta	2
	Igarapé João	2
	Vila do Galho	5
TOTAL	13	23

Source: Field Work Research, 2005

Step Two

With the PRA completed by FANEP and group discussions done exclusively by the researcher, three communities were then selected for in-depth analysis of the impact of the *ProAmbiente* on local communities: Vila do Galho, Jauíra and Cabo Verde, all located in the *município* of Concórdia do Pará. The *município* of Concórdia do Pará

was chosen for practical reasons. The researcher was already there, made good contacts with community leaders and identified that Concórdia do Pará had the research requirements of communities with cultural diversity. Vila do Galho is composed of people from the region itself (*caboclos*⁴⁹, people of mixed Indigenous-African-Portuguese backgrounds); Jauíra is a community formed by people with different backgrounds (a mix between *caboclos* and people from different states of north-east Brazil); Cabo Verde is a community of *quilombos* (closed community of descendants of former slaves who have preserved their cultural identity).

Table 10

**Characteristics of the Selected Communities for Analysing the Impact of the
*ProAmbiente***

<i>Município</i>	Communities	Characteristics
Concórdia do Pará	Vila do Galho	Geographically organised to facilitate contacts between the families; Good kinship (family) relations.
	Jauíra	Presence of people <i>assentamento</i> (spontaneous and sponsored by government); Geographically dispersed; Kinship (family) and non-kinship relations.
	Cabo Verde	Little interaction with other communities. Kinship relations. Geographically dispersed.

Source: The author, 2005.

⁴⁹ See analysis of the term *Caboclo* in Chapter Seven

Step Three: Selection of Community Informants

In each community, the researcher selected key informants and leaders to carry out semi-structured interviews and help her to organise discussion groups inside the communities. The key informants were selected during the workshop and were deemed the most active and knowledgeable people of each community represented in the workshop. As stated previously, active participation in the workshop meetings and understanding about the *ProAmbiente* were the main criteria for choosing the key informants.

The discussion groups were organised in different forms: women, leaders and households, and young people. During the focus group process, the researcher identified some new issues and then programmed new 'open' interviews with selected member of the communities. These members were selected according to issues raised in the focus groups.

Table 11 summarises the process of research selection and the criteria used from definition of the pole to selection of community members.

Table 11

Summary of Criteria for Case Study Selection

Research Phases	Selection Criteria
Selection of the pole	<p>Pole where the programme was well established;</p> <p>Pole with official authorization to carry out the field work and to have access to information;</p> <p>Pole with easier access to NGO that works at intermediary level.</p>
Selection of <i>municipio</i>	<p><i>Municipio</i> where the programme was well established;</p> <p><i>Municipio</i> where the programme was in advanced phase;</p> <p><i>Municipio</i> with social and cultural diversity;</p> <p><i>Municipio</i> with environmental conditions to carry out the field work.</p>
Selection of local communities	<p>Communities with social and cultural diversity between themselves;</p> <p>Communities with less problematic access;</p> <p>Communities with minimal infrastructure and security conditions to enable the researcher to stay for a long period of time;</p> <p>Communities that enabled the researcher to observe and analyse the impact of the programme on people's livelihoods;</p> <p>Communities that are socially organised to facilitate focus groups to identify people's expectations about the programme.</p>
Selection of informants	<p>Leaders of the communities;</p> <p>Key informants identified in the fieldwork process (focus groups).</p>

Source: The Author

Methods of Analysis

Three levels of analysis were established for examining the *ProAmbiente* programme as the research case study: macro, intermediate and local levels. The macro level of analysis was understood as the *ProAmbiente* proposals (and actions) for community development. The intermediate level of analysis included the links between public policy and the *ProAmbiente* and their different types of interaction. The local level of analysis focused on local communities, identifying rural people's expectations for control over the assets of their livelihoods.

The data analysis research on the macro level focused on programme development. It aimed to identify the criteria for choosing the programme focus, the knowledge concepts emphasised for key activities of the programme and methods of the knowledge used in the programme to implement people participation. On this level, the research distinguished between the processes of popular participation in the diverse phases of the programme: negotiation, implantation and consolidation. This is required an identification of the key features that are designed to empower the communities.

At the intermediary level, the research concentrated on the analysis of the NGOs that are building links between the *ProAmbiente* and the local communities. The identification of the two NGOs (FANEP and FASE) that have been working at the intermediary level was important to examine the programme's performance and programme actions at local level. The sources of information consisted of semi-structured interviews with NGO members such as co-ordinators, managers and agricultural technicians, those directly involved with the *ProAmbiente*. There was

also secondary material that consisted of analysis of documentation produced by these NGOs.

At the local level of analysis, the research involved community leaders, group leaders, householders, members of local government (*prefeituras* - council) where the communities are located, members of the *Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem Terra* – MST (Landless Movement) and members of *Sindicatos dos Trabalhadores Rurais* – STRs (Rural Workers' Unions). These sources could identify people's expectations of the programme for the improvement of their livelihoods and their knowledge (skills or abilities) for using natural resources.

Data Gathering

The researcher applied the following methods of data gathering to access information on a macro-policy level, an intermediary-NGO level and a local-community level: documentary analysis, participant observation, focus groups, unstructured and semi-structured interviews. These different methods allowed the researcher to collect data from a triangulation analysis perspective. Triangulation has become as an important methodological issue in qualitative research approaches to evaluation in order to control bias and to establish valid propositions. As states Patton (2001: 247), triangulation strengthens a study by combining methods. The strategies used for data gathering are consistent with the theme of triangulation inherent to a single case study which includes a cross-check of information provided by the different actors in the field work research.

(i) Documentary Analysis

The documentary analysis consisted of examining programme planning and implementation of all phases of policy actions to link the macro to the micro level. In order to study the process of the *ProAmbiente*, a critical approach to the presentation of policy practice was adopted. For this reason, the study reviewed the formal programme documentation and project operations to investigate possible gaps between policy and practice. Sources of information included formal and public documents, such as the various revisions of programme proposals, programme reports and official submission of NGO reports to policy makers. This level of sources also included other documents from Brazilian government institutions such as the Ministry of the Environment (MMA), and the Brazilian Institute for the Environment and Renewable Natural Resources (*Instituto Brasileiro do Meio Ambiente e Recursos Naturais Renováveis*- IBAMA).

(ii) Participant Observations

Participant observations took place particularly in the course of PRA (Participatory Rural Appraisal) carried by FANEP during the workshop for discussion on the PADEQ project. The method of participant observation contributed to a better understanding of the different levels of people's participation in the project design. Observation also contributed to an understanding of the cultural aspects of the communities, such as beliefs, interest and priorities. It also helped in the knowledge of the social structures of the groups and how they are interrelated within the systems that are set up for them.

The PRA exercises conducted by the FANEP during the workshop enabled the researcher to gather detailed information about the programme itself, about the

communities' involvement in it and about people's interests in, and expectations of, the programme. The objective of the FANEP workshops was to develop local planning from the use of participatory methods. This planning aimed to emphasise local people's knowledge following what Chambers (1992) suggests as fundamental in changing priorities. The workshop took place in the community of Vila do Galho and involved at least one leader of each local community of the Rio Capim pole. These leaders were agriculturists, members of the *STRs*, community leaders, local group leaders and individuals interested in the subject. Twenty three leaders participated in all the workshop events. Others (heads of labour unions, local government representatives) participated just once or twice in different events.

(iii) Focus Groups

Four focus groups (discussion groups) were carried out by the researcher.

(a) Focus group with all community leaders of the Rio Capim pole

This focus group focused on (a) the meaning of community; (b) expectations of the participants of their involvement in the different phases of the programme; and (c) expectations of the communities in accessing resources such as 'payment for the environmental services'. This focus group was carried out with the participation of the same people from the FANEP workshop (23 people, 18 male and 5 female from diverse areas of the pole of Rio Capim), however at different times (at the end of the day at each FANEP workshop), methodology and aims. At the beginning of each focus group discussion, brainstorming sessions were held to differentiate between FANEP's work and the research exercise.

Table 12**Focus Group One: Rio Capim Pole Community Leaders and Householders**

Município	Communities	Total of Participants	
		Leaders	Householders
São Domingos do Capim	Estabocal	1	
	Boa Viagem	1	
	Fé em Deus	1	
	Monte São	1	
Mãe do Rio	Santana Piripindeua	1	
	Nove Jerusalém	1	
	Santa Rita	1	
Irituia	Condeixa	1	
Concórdia do Pará	Ipanema	1	1
	Jauíra	1	3
	Conduta	1	1
	Igarapé João	1	1
	Vila do Galho	1	4
TOTAL = 23		13	10

Source: Field Work, 2005.

The researcher divided the large group into two subgroups to facilitate the discussion. During the first focus group discussion, the researcher asked participants to state what the term community means for them. Sequentially the researcher carried out two other issues: (1) expectations of the participants of their involvement in the different phases of the programme; (2) expectations of the communities in accessing resources such as ‘payment for the environmental services’. The researcher asked them to express themselves in writing, mapping or diagramming (this issue is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 7).

During the presentations of the results of the group discussion, there was a reluctance of some participants to share specific opinions in public. This was due to individual characteristics (naturally quiet people) and to political reasons. Referring to the latter, for instance, the researcher noted that some participants avoided talking about conflicts for land occupation in the area. Others avoided talking about internal community problems in carrying out the programme because of the presence of

FANEP staff (they were not part of the meeting, but were always around the sessions). These participants feared exclusion from the programme. Once noted, the researcher decided to carry out discussions later under semi-structured interviews.

(b) Focus group with women from the *município* of Concórdia do Pará

This focus group was carried out in two sessions. Each session was composed of eight women and lasted approximately one hour each. This focus group was carried out after the FANEP workshop. A focus group with women was prioritised because only five women had participated in the FANEP workshop and none of them were from Concórdia do Pará. The discussion group aimed to gather data about the women's beliefs, values, needs and priorities and the women's expectations about the programme. Other specific issues were raised and debated in the discussion groups. What are the group's priorities? What are the group's objectives for livelihood improvements? What constitutes local knowledge? Consequently, the focus groups enabled the researcher to gather data and to gain insight about local knowledge and women's priorities for improving their livelihoods.

Table 13

Focus Group Two: Concórdia do Pará Women

Communities	Total of Participants
Ipanema	1
Jauíra	1
Conduta	1
Igarapé João	1
Vila do Galho	4
TOTAL = 8	8

Source: Field Work, 2005

(c) Focus group with leaders and households from the *município* of Concórdia do Pará

This focus group was carried out in only one session. This focus group was also composed of eight people and aimed to identify problems encountered inside the communities to carry out the programme actions in the *município* of Concórdia do Pará. The focus group session was also held at the end of the FANEP workshop period.

During the discussion about problems encountered inside the communities in carrying out the programme actions, issues of land expansion emerged. The last phase of this focus group concentrated on the construction of figures for the use of land and agricultural production. These figures of the area indicated both the communities and the rivers that are sources of production according to their importance in the community (see figure 5). Participants produced an amount of information regarding each land area, using diagramming. As examples, they produced figures of Unit of Family Production - UFP (*Unidade de Produção Familiar*), and location of the units (see Figure 9). The use of information in this way created a forum for community awareness and a starting point for local people's debates on community expansion, future area uses for agriculture, cultivation and other issues about the use of land.

Table 14

Focus Group Three: Concórdia do Pará Community Leaders and Householders

Communities	Total of Participants	
	Leaders	Householders
Ipanema	1	-
Jaurá	1	-
Conduta	1	1
Igarapé João	1	-
Vila do Galho	1	2
TOTAL = 8	5	3

Source: Field Work, 2005

(d) Focus group with young people from *Vila do Galho* (in the *município* of Concórdia do Pará)

The researcher found exclusion of young people in participating in the FANEP workshop a critical issue in the *ProAmbiente*. Their values, beliefs, needs and priorities were not considered in the PADEQ and in the pole diagnosis. The researcher believed it fundamental to gain information about young people expectations from the *ProAmbiente* and from the communities. Two questions were defined for this focus group: What are the group's priorities? What are the group's objectives for livelihood improvements? This focus group was held only once. The session was composed of eight teenagers and was approximately one hour.

Table 15

Focus Group Four: Vila do Galho Young People

Gender	Total of Participants
Boys	3
Girls	5
TOTAL	8

Source: Field Work, 2005

The focus group method enabled the researcher to gain a large amount of information in a short period of time. A certain criteria influenced the adoption of the focus groups. Particularly, the focus group was viewed as a useful tool to apply power differences between the participants and decision-makers and also to elicit the views, emotions and expectations of each group of people towards the governmental programme in the local communities. Although the focus group as a research method is criticised for the small number of people participating and also because it may not be a representative sample in terms of ability to generalise findings to whole population (White and Thompson, 1995: 257), it is a useful method to complement other methods of research, especially for triangulation purposes. For the participants, the focus group was an opportunity to highlight their view of the world and their values and beliefs about their situation. Interaction was also essential in enabling participants to ask each other questions, as well as in re-evaluating and reconsidering their own understanding of their specific experiences (Kitzinger, 1995: 301).

(iv) Unstructured and Semi-structured Interviews

The unstructured and semi-structured interviews were particularly useful to explore specific issues. They were categorised into three levels: macro level (national organisers), intermediate level (regional organisations, NGOs) and local level (communities). At the macro level, the interviews aimed to identify the background of the *ProAmbiente* and the different phases of the programme implementation by focusing on the national programme staff and using semi-structured interviews. These interviews were carried out with the two *ProAmbiente* co-ordinators (members of the *Ministério do Meio Ambiente* – MMA (Ministry of the Environment) and two former co-ordinators (former members of the MMA) totalising four people.

At intermediary level, which comprises the NGOs that link between the federal government and communities of the *ProAmbiente*, the interviews concentrated on two agents of the FASE (general coordinator of the NGO and the field manager of *ProAmbiente*) and five FANEP agents (coordinator of the NGO, field manager of the *ProAmbiente*, manager of the PADEQ project, and two other staff members of the NGO) totalising seven people.

At local level, the unstructured and semi-structured interviews involved 23 people. In Marajó, the interviews were carried out with three community leaders, one local association leader (Fishermen's Union), two NGOs acting in the area (RESEX and CNS) and four households identified as key informants. In Concórdia do Pará, the interviews were carried out with four community leaders, one labour union leader and eight people identified as key informants at community level (six households and two teachers) (Table 16 shows profile of interviewees by responsibility). They were identified as key informants to distinguish between the process of the community's participation in the diverse phases of the programme (negotiation and implementation), to talk about the existent conflicts for land occupation in the area and to give more details of internal problems in the communities when delivering the programme.

Table 16

Profile of Interviewees by Responsibility

Levels of Analysis	Interviewees	Total
Macro	Ministry of Environment	
	Current coordinators	2
	Former coordinators	2
Intermediary	FASE	
	Coordinator	1
	Field work manager	1
	FANEP	
	Coordinator	1
	Field work manager	1
	Manager of PADEQ project	1
	Staff members	2
Community	Marajó Pole (Pilot research)	
	Community leaders	3
	Head of Fishermen's Union	1
	Head of NGOs acting in the area (CNS and RESEX)	2
	Key informants - Fishermen	4
	Rio Capim Pole	
	Community leaders	
	Head of Concórdia do Pará Labour Union	4
	Key informants - Households	1
	Key informants – Teachers	6
		2
	TOTAL	34

Source: The Author

Table 17
Summary of Research Data Gathering and Number of People Involved

Method	Number of People Involved			Level of Analysis	Issues
Documentary Analysis	—			Macro	<i>ProAmbiente</i> planning and implementation.
Participant Observation	23			Intermediary	People's participation; Incorporation of people's beliefs, interests, and local knowledge.
Focus Groups	FC1	23		Community	The meaning of communities; Expectations of the <i>ProAmbiente</i> participants; Access to resources; Women's and young people's belief, values and priorities; What constitute local knowledge; Problems in carrying out the <i>ProAmbiente</i> actions.
	FC2	8			
	FC3	8			
	FC4	8			
Interviews	Government	4		Macro	Background of the <i>ProAmbiente</i> ; People's participation in the different phases of the <i>ProAmbiente</i> implementation; Internal community's conflicts; Conflicts for land occupation.
	NGOs	7		Intermediary	
	Communities	Soure	10	Community	
		Concórdia do Pará	13		

Source: The Author

FC1: Focus group with all community leaders of the Rio Capim pole.

FC2: Focus group with women from the *município* of Concórdia do Pará.

FC3: Focus group with leaders and households from the *município* of Concórdia do Pará.

FC4: Focus group with young people from *Vila do Galho* in the *município* of Concórdia do Pará.

Research Reliability and Validity

Although the term reliability is most used for evaluating quantitative research, this term has also been used in research that uses qualitative methods. If the idea of testing is seen as a way of information elicitation, the most important test of any qualitative study is bound to be its quality. A qualitative study helps an understanding of a situation that would otherwise be enigmatic or confusing (Eisner, 1991: 58). The concept of reliability in a qualitative study has the purpose of generating understanding (Stenbacka, 2001: 551) rather than measuring what cannot be measured. In any study that deal with meaning (in this study the meaning of community), expectation, values and beliefs (here the expectations, values and beliefs of community peoples), then the reliability of the research is on the feeling

and words of the informants. The reliability of this research is centred on the understanding of issues relating to people's culture and knowledge (which includes people's expectation, values and beliefs) in the *ProAmbiente* design and people's participation in all phases of this programme.

The concept of validity in its turn has been described by a wide range of terms in qualitative studies. This term is not a single, fixed or universal term, but rather a contingent construct, inescapably grounded in the processes and intentions of particular research methodologies and projects (Winter, 2000: 1). In relation to quantitative research, validity is very specific to the test to which it is applied. Validity in qualitative research requiring different methods to test the data collected. Triangulation is typically a strategy (test) for improving the validity and reliability of research or for evaluation of findings. It is the most appropriate method to provide validity in qualitative research (Mathinson, 1988: 13). From this perspective, this research paid special attention to taking data from different sources (macro, intermediary and community levels) and to use different methods of data gathering (documentary analysis, participant observation, focus groups and interviews) in order to get as near as possible to the truth. As the researcher acted alone in all research phases the level of data inconsistency was taken as a minimum.

Conclusion: Limitations, Problems and Bias of the Methodology

Adopted

The methodology adopted faced various problems from the delineation of the *municípios*, poles and communities to be analysed, to the definition of the sample size of respondents at community level. For example, the definition of the *município*, pole and communities was a real dilemma that had to be solved during the process of investigation. It was not possible to anticipate from Swansea the problems that the poles of Marajó and Transamazônica were facing. The initial actions of the programme in the pole of Marajó broke down. In the pole of Transamazônica the programme was being delivered under violence and conflicts — an unfavourable atmosphere for academic research. Therefore, in the pole of Marajó, the interviews concentrated on the programme proposals and people's expectations about the programme rather than on the programme actions as was previously planned. The pole of Transamazônica was substituted by the Rio Capim pole (also called Nordeste Paraense pole) and this resulted in a redesign of the field work research. However, in the Rio Capim pole, it was possible to take data from the *ProAmbiente* planning and the *ProAmbiente* action and then use data about the role played by intermediary NGOs to link this governmental programme with local communities; and to examine the dynamics of the relationship between development agencies, individuals, community leaders and other actors within local spaces. Thus, the redesign of the field work research had a positive outcome on the research as a whole.

The sample size at community level was defined according to the research progress. The number of key informants and focus group participants was not previously defined as the researcher did not know the communities before her participation in

the FANEP workshop. The time spent on the field work and people's accessibility and availability for collaboration were critical factors for the definition of the sample size. Although the research planning had drafted the field work research inside different communities, the distance between the communities, the access difficulties, the time spent on field work and the financial restrictions influenced changes in the process. However, the researcher considered that the sample size was satisfactory to answer the research questions based on the community's participation in the phases of negotiation and implementation of *ProAmbiente*, the existence of land occupation conflicts and the internal problems in the communities when delivering the programme. The data collected by interviews at the community level involved 23 people in Soure and Corcórdia do Pará. The answers collected during the interviews were repeated and this was the main reason for the number of interviews done. The FANEP workshop in which the researcher participated as an observer also involved 23 people and the specific focus groups covered 47 people (Table 17 summarises the research data gathering and number of people involved). As this research was based on a qualitative research method which is concerns with the quality of the data rather than the number of answers, the researcher considered that the focus groups, interviews and participant observations carried out at community level were sufficient to meet the research questions. As argued by Johnson (1995: 4), in any qualitative research the aim is to engage in research that probes for deeper understanding rather than examining surface features. From the method of data gathering applied, a deeper understanding emerged of people's participation in all phases of *ProAmbiente*, their beliefs, interests and local knowledge, their meaning of community and internal conflicts in their community.

Although all respondents discussed the specific topics asked of them, a limitation of the interview strategies at the micro level of community was felt. For instance, the researcher became aware that some of the respondents found the tape-recorder uncomfortable when talking freely about specific aspects of their life. When the researcher noted this, she stopped tape recording, took notes and left the discussion of specific issues for another time. After a second or third contact, the interviews were recorded at the request of the same informants who felt more comfortable with the research procedures. Although the large amount of tape-recorded information helped to establish a large picture of the reality facing local communities, the researcher spent a long time transcribing all the interviews to analyse them in this thesis.

A range of the benefits was obtained from the information shared with the FANEP team during the discussions. The workshop promoted by the NGO provided an invaluable opportunity for the researcher to develop further insights. However, management of the activities was biased, mainly to have individual interviews with the agriculturists present in the workshop. However, the researcher identified some strategies to carry out interviews and made clear the difference between FANEP and the research work. After a tiring day of activities in very hot weather, the participants felt exhausted at the end of the meeting. In order to conduct the interviews the researcher had to ask some people, mainly agriculturist leaders, to talk about some issues at night. Despite the limitation imposed by working at night because of absence of good quality of light in the communities, it was felt that valuable data was collected in this strategy. The interviewees were on the whole extremely co-operative in these meetings.

The expectations of the focus group participants were a constraining factor and a challenge at the beginning of this work. The researcher informed those involved in the workshop that she was conducting academic work that was completely different from FANEP's work. However, as she was a student of an overseas university and appeared together with FANEP members, the communities viewed the research as something that could bring some advantages to community. At the beginning this was a source of some discomfort to the researcher. However, during the data gathering process the researcher felt that focus group participants could differentiate between FANEP and research approaches and contributed valuable information to the research.

Chapter Five

Macro-Level: the Route of the *ProAmbiente*

Introduction

This chapter examines the strategies of the *ProAmbiente* in scaling up its political influence. It provides analyses of macro-level policy in the context of the Brazilian *ProAmbiente* programme. The aim is to examine the trajectory of the Brazilian government, its linkages with the global movement of sustainability and the strategies that have influenced the policy agenda. It is argued that assessment of the *ProAmbiente* involves actions at different levels that use more interactive methods of dealing with environmental concerns through a defined focus on social and institutional levels of sustainability.

The chapter is divided in two sections. The first section examines the correlation between international policy and the mechanisms for environment preservation in the Brazilian context. It identifies the programme background and the factors of influence on its transformation from grassroots project to governmental programme and then the scaling down from governmental programme to project implementation. The second section focuses on the new governmental planning to distinguish the priorities behind the programme actions.

Section One: International Appeals for Environment Preservation and Brazilian Policy Changes from the 1990s

Connection with the International Movement for Sustainability

International attention on the degradation of the environment in Amazonia and its impact on the world's atmosphere resulted in the creation of an international mechanism to support conservation of Amazonia's natural resources. That proposal was carried out by the G7⁵⁰ at its 1990 meeting and was debated during the 1992 United Nations conference on environment and development in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. It outlined elements of good governance (Ayre and Callway, 2005: 29) and established strategies for a homogenisation of discourse for new ways of development. However, the differences in power position of the states within the UN mean that they do not exercise similar levels of power and influence (Saha, 2002: 17) and this was reflected in the UN conference. Differences in knowledge accumulation, participation capacities, different interests and motivations, all contribute to a widening gap between the abilities of the North and the South to respond to environmental concerns (Ivanova, 2005: 57).

The UN conference resulted in a series of references to adopt principles with regards to biodiversity conservation being dropped (Ayre and Callway, 2005:29). These initiatives have affected the model of development in the Brazilian Amazonia region. The whole content of the conference and its implication for the region cannot be examined within scope of this thesis, however is significant to point out that the UN conference is the initial reference for the adoption of a sustainable development

⁵⁰ The term G7 means the most developed countries in the world. These are: the United States, Great Britain, Italy, France, Germany, Japan and Canada.

approach in Amazonia. Within the approach of sustainable development was included the concept of sustainable livelihoods. By taking the concept of sustainable livelihoods, the UN conference documents suggest a possible link between social and environmental ends as a mechanism of global governance (Ivanova, 2005; Ayre and Callway, 2005).

Man has the fundamental right to freedom, equality and adequate conditions of life, in an environment of a quality that permits a life of dignity and well-being, and he bears a solemn responsibility to protect and improve the environment for present and future generations. In this respect, policies promoting or perpetuating apartheid, racial segregation, discrimination, colonial and other forms of oppression and foreign domination stand condemned and must be eliminated (UNEP, 1972, Principle 1, Declaration of the UN Conference on the Human Environment)

Economic and social development is essential for ensuring a favorable living and working environment for man and for creating conditions on earth that are necessary for the improvement of the quality of life (UNEP, 1972, Principle 1, Declaration of the UN Conference on the Human Environment)

The term sustainable was introduced in Brazil without a definition of its principles and an unclear debate of the central focus of the objectives of interventions. Livelihoods consist of tangible (land, cash, cows) and intangible assets (social relationships) on which people can draw. How they are able to use such assets is mediated by a matrix of institutions, regulations and cultural norms (Toner and Franks, 2006: 81).

(...) There is a lack of common understanding of what sustainable development and sustainable livelihood mean (...) there is a lack of regulation on what weighting should be attached to the economic, environmental, and social dimensions (...) however we cannot ignore the importance of the concepts because it is accepted for all of us that they all contribute to improving the wellbeing of people, both now and in the future (...) that is why we are looking for a way to put the concepts into practice (...) we need to do this (...) ⁵¹.

Despite an unclear understanding of these concepts, the Brazilian federal, regional and municipal governments adopted a normative discourse of sustainability. Under such discourse, policies and programmes at different levels of government were formulated to achieve sustainable development and sustainable livelihoods.

⁵¹ Interview with one of the creators of the *ProAmbiente*, EMBRAPA-Brasília, May 2005.

(...) Since the 1992 Rio de Janeiro Conference everyone [federal, regional and municipal governments] adopted the concept of sustainable development (...) this was the only way to have access to international resources (...) ⁵².

Since the 1970s, proposals have appeared from economic mechanisms in environmental management in Brazil, such as 'polluter pays', 'user pays', and 'protector receives' as instruments of government control measures (licensing, management plans, zoning, etc.). However, these mechanisms were not effective (Born and Talocchi, 2002: 106). Between the 1960s and 1980s, government interventions supported by multilateral banks, accelerated the speed in which vast areas of the Brazilian Amazonia were cleared creating new frontiers for large landholders and companies (Veríssimo and Coslosky, 2002: 57). Workers and small rural landowners were displaced from one region to another as a result of the negative conservative modernisation of agriculture in Brazil (Tura, 2000, Veríssimo and Coslosky, 2000).

Government policies designed to open up Amazonia for human settlement and to encourage certain types of economic activity have played a key role in the deforestation process. In particular, massive road-building programs carried out in the 1960s and 1970s made large areas of the region accessible by land for the first time and government - sponsored settlement schemes simultaneously attracted migrants from Brazil's Northeast and South regions. Special fiscal incentives and subsidized credit lines encouraged land uses such as cattle raising, which allowed a relatively small population to have a large impact on the rain forest". (Mahar, 1979: 9-10)

In 1995, President Fernando Henrique Cardoso came to power and subscribed to the sustainable development agenda of Amazonia, based on the 1995 Kyoto Protocol. This protocol was an international agreement to restrict future greenhouse emissions. However, while the agreement has been followed in some countries, ratification of the protocol remains limited despite a number of follow-up meetings, which have tried to clarify the mechanisms for implementing the proposal (Hall, 2004; Smith, 2000).

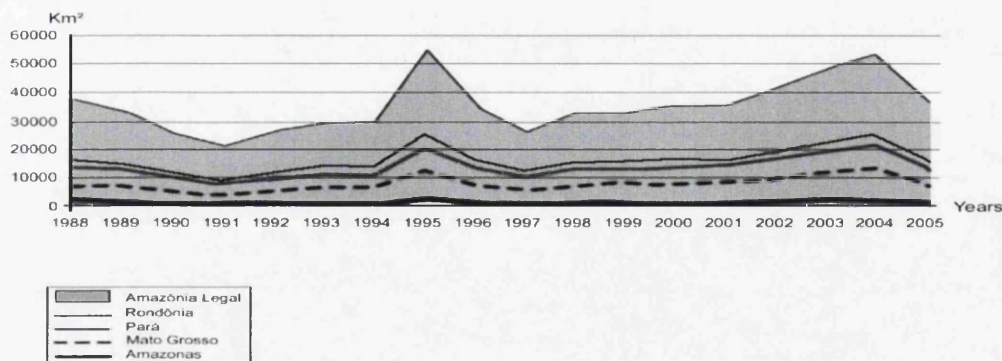
Interview with one of the creators of the *Proambiente*, EMBRAPA-Brasília, May 2005.

However, the broad feature of the President Fernando Henrique governmental discourse, as stated in the first Plano Plurianual-PPA 1996-1999 (National Four Year Plan) protectionism was the basis of the official Brazilian environmental approach to Amazonia (Hall, 2004: 9).

Federal government actions in the issue of environment involve strategies for rational use of natural resources based on new patterns of environment participatory management and on planning process based on territory ordainment. The planning ought to be an instrument for territory use regulation taking into account the criterion of sustainability" (PPA, 1996: 11)

This plan, however, failed to prevent increasing deforestation. For example, the total area deforested in Pará rose substantially from 69,495 km² in 2000 to 103,335 km² in 2005 (INPE, 2006).

Figure 3
Deforestation in Brazilian Amazonia (km²/year): 1988 - 2005



Source: INPE, 2006

National and local governments all over the world have supported grassroots community understanding and action on environmental issues as an essential component to answer the range of pressing global environmental issues (Smith, 2000: 212). However, despite a widely shared rhetoric of citizen participation in policy there is a need of government-sponsored programmes on such issues. In Brazil, for example, the *Zoneamento Econômico Ecológico* – ZEE Presidential Decree (Ecological and Economic Zoning) was re-established and the federal government took responsibility for national and regional zoning through the *Secretaria de Assuntos Estratégicos* - SAE (Secretariat for Strategic Affairs).

Despite a series of large-scale maps⁵³ that have been produced by the SAE, the results are ineffective in revealing comprehensive land use to guide the planning process. From the SAE perspective, “the guidelines of Brazilian political strategic international policy include the preservation of national and regional interest in a context of ‘no worldwide conflict’, characterised by the gap between the global and systemic political-strategic and techno-productive dynamic” (Posey, 2000: 36). There were plans to set up a computerised database linking the nine Amazonian states of Brazil using special software for image processing in an attempt to standardise procedures. However, the impact of protests by excluded groups such as peasants, supported by national and international NGOs has meant that the understanding of zoning has changed. Mahar (2000) argues that since the 1980s, the Brazilian government proposed prescriptive land-use zoning as a means for rationalising land use in the Amazonia region. The term prescriptive refers to the manner in which the land areas were categorised in terms of their best uses from the

⁵³ The SAE has produced large-scale maps for Amazonia (1:1,000,000), individual States (1:250,000) and ‘critical areas (1:100,000) all likely to be affected by the development corridors or ‘axes’ identified in Brazil’s infrastructure development plans (*Brasil em Ação*) (Hall, 2000).

standpoint of sustainable development through the use of aerial and satellite maps, soil samples, biodiversity, inventories and other technical information (op. cit., 115). The problem is that the state or local governments decided the forms of land uses based on procedures that had impacted local communities negatively.⁵⁴

At the present, the ZEE has now incorporated socio-political perspectives in which the definition of appropriated forms of land use must be negotiated between social actors within government and civil society (Mahar, 2000; Posey, 2000). Although negotiation has been introduced in cases of conflicting interests among environmentalists/preservationists, large farmers, *latifundiários*, extractors and agriculturists, ultimately, this top-down policy has been influenced by zoning policy (Hall, 1991, 2004; Mahar, 2000).

A challenge to the official mainstream emerged between NGOs and research institutes, namely the concept of 'productive conservation' as a variant of sustainable development (MMA, 2005a). Such a concept "refers to situations in which the productive use of natural resources to promote economic growth and strengthen local livelihoods goes hand in hand with the conservation of those resources for the benefit of present and future generations" (Hall, 2004: 21). The productive conservation approach takes further the active involvement of resources-users in the process of environmental management, and economic production is a feasible and absolute prerequisite for sustainability (Hall, 1991, 2004). It is based on the assumption that a significant share of the responsibility for protecting the Amazonian environment should be entrusted to those whose livelihoods depend on its preservation.

⁵⁴ See Mahar (2000) about the experience of land zoning in Rondônia.

Agroforestry has been promoted extensively as a sustainability-enhancing practice that differs from the rather limited view of sustainability as simply increased production of crop yields, conserving the soil and recycling nutrients (Altieri, 2002; Macedo, 2002). This new perspective of sustainability connected to agroforestry is recognized as a science based on principles of natural resource management such as participatory, technical and policy research principles (Macedo, 2002; Toner and Franks, 2006). The use of agroforestry design in the “closed areas” of conservation units in Brazil has led to a proposal to apply a similar system in ‘open areas’ under the management of the rural population.

Sustainability should be sought on four levels such as: (a) financial: so that systems can continue without support from external funding sources; (b) institutional: through integration with existing institutions; (c) environmental: to maximise the sustainable use of natural resources and (d) social: to minimise social exclusion and complement the local cultural context (Toner and Franks, 2006: 82-3).

The rhetoric of sustainable development has become the accepted response to the environmental challenges faced by contemporary societies (Smith, 2000: 211). As the concept becomes more extensively accepted amongst politicians, policy-makers and the public, evidence is building about its practical significance (op. cit., 212). Interest is increasingly focusing on the roles and responsibilities of citizens and consumers, individuals and institutions, and local and national spaces, in translating statements of intent into practical actions (Smith, 2000: 211). The sustainability concept has encouraged much discussion of the *ProAmbiente* and has led to proposed adjustments in conventional agriculture to make it more environmentally, socially and economically viable (MMA, 2005a). Although the concept of sustainability is still controversial and diverse, it has been useful because it brings attention to

agricultural opportunities grounded in the co-evolution of socio-economic and natural systems (Altieri, 2002: 40). This process of change can be seen from the case study of the *ProAmbiente* programme, which reflects basic patterns of agricultural changes across Amazonia, with some modifications.

(...) *ProAmbiente* is a programme to avoid the repetition of the mistakes from the past, where isolated credit policies were applied, without sufficient and adequate technical support, a productive infrastructure, information and access to markets (...). This programme works with the new concept of rural production, based on the incorporation of new techniques in the production process. For production to be sustainable and conservationist, it is necessary to incorporate the 'Environmental Service' into the UFP⁵⁵.

In this programme model, agricultural production is considered in a more complex set of social, cultural, political and economic dimensions rather than merely technical conditions. Some elements of responsibility sharing have been incorporated into the strategies of environment concerns for Brazilian Amazonia. For example, the participation of local people in the *Unidades de Conservação* - UC (Management of Conservation Units) and in the experimental state-level plans of the *Plano de Gerenciamento Ambiental Integrado* - *PGAI* (Integrated Environmental Management Plan) has brought together local institutions to work with UC and PGAI managers and staff (MMA, 2005a: 20). Local populations are increasingly recognised as major players in providing solutions to the challenge of defining and implementing sustainable development. The RESEX, for example, are seen as the most original and well-adapted forms of conservation units to meet social conditions as the local people can remain in the area and have autonomy over the use and management of natural resources (Veríssimo and Coslosky, 2002: 61).⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Speech by Federal Deputy Anselmo de Jesus in the Legislative Assembly, Brasília, 15/03/2003

⁵⁶ See Veríssimo and Coslosky (2002) about the importance of the RESEXs in Acre. This reserve covers 10% of the territory of the state.

Official development planning in the Brazilian Amazonia, on the contrary, failed to involve a systematic consultation of the affected local people who were outside of the policy decision making to defend their own interests. The social and environmental consequences of such blueprint planning had often negatively impacted rural populations causing displacement as well as the destruction of ecology and livelihoods. In the cases of the UC and the PGAI, NGOs have been instrumental in focusing on this distortion by mobilising local populations and supporting their organisational capacity so that local interests and priorities may be effectively articulated (Robb, 2002). However, as Robb (2002: 28) asks, the key element is how can the poor influence national policy while standing apart from the powerful? If this articulation of needs has assisted project design and execution, it also contributes more broadly to policy reform.

In connection with poverty reduction, local people, governments, NGOs and local organisations have increasingly become involved when seeking to address conditions of poverty (Webster and Engberg-Pedersen, 2002: 4). Global consensus has advanced a significant body of law on sustainable development over the past three decades and has refined the definition of this term to integrate environmental issues with poverty alleviation and good governance (Küpçü, 2005: 90). This implies that the people's participation in good governance for sustainable development has become an essential component of the success of policy implementation, which clearly demonstrates that local people (the poor) are central. They are the objectives of intervention. When President Luis Inácio Lula da Silva came to power in 2003, actions to support family-based agriculture were increased. President Lula was elected promising to reinforce policies for small-scale agriculture and to establish a policy to protect the environment of Amazonia. Among the political forces that

supported Lula da Silva were the NGOs, social movement groups and research institutes that elaborated the concept of 'productive conservation' as a possibility of sustainable development, particularly in areas with small-scale, family-based rural production. This sustainable point of view confronts the values of conventional development. The process of sustainable development is not just about managing and allocating natural capital. It is about making a decision of who has the power both for decision making and to institute whatever social, economic and political reforms are considered necessary (Reid, 1995: 231).

The organisations that support the creation of the *ProAmbiente* gained power in the new government period. Using their influence, they submitted to federal government the *ProAmbiente* proposal and recommended its implementation as public policy. For development to be sustainable, it requires the active involvement of the people themselves in the design and implementation of activities planned to improve their interests.

Dear President, we are here on behalf of our fellow rural workers {*companheiros*} to talk about the *ProAmbiente* proposal. (...) our request here is to incorporate the *ProAmbiente* programme into a new multi-annual investment plan for 2004-2007 (PPA – *Plano Plurianual*). (...) For a long time we have waited for solutions for the small rural producers of Amazonia, but so far these have not come (...). Therefore, the rural workers of Amazonia organised a proposal (...) I am here as a legislative representative and as a rural worker that has spent a long time in supporting our class (...) as an agriculturist I always ask to myself why is rural life so hard? Many of our *companheiros* have moved to urban peripheries and/or to new agriculture frontiers. The reasons for these problems are too difficult to explain because each family has its own life history. However, the lack of support for Amazonian agriculturists is one of the main reasons (...) Based on this, Mr President, all social organisations from Amazonia in rural areas have built a programme for the socio-economic and environmental development of the rural production families, called the *ProAmbiente*. (...) I have to say that despite Amazonia's immense territory and its huge problems, diverse economic alternatives have emerged from local communities and the *ProAmbiente* is one of these alternatives that is very useful for rural people's lives (...) but, it needs more political engagement and support from the governmental sectors (...). What we need is more engagement to transform such initiatives into official policies with sufficient technical and financial support. We believe that the *ProAmbiente* is a good opportunity to change our rural reality because it has emerged from the agriculturists' environmental concerns. And now, Mr President, our proposal is to incorporate the *ProAmbiente* into public policy since it was one of the proposals assumed by your administration, mainly from the Ministry of Environment, Sra Marina Silva⁵⁷.

⁵⁷ Speech by Federal Deputy Anselmo de Jesus in the Legislative Assembly, Brasília, 15/03/2003.

The emergence of sustainability as a goal for agriculture and development has stimulated increasing interest in understanding ecological processes within agricultural productivity and reducing negative environmental impacts of agricultural activities (Power and Kenmore, 2002: 233). Experiences in a variety of countries have shown that participatory approaches to research and development, with innovative modes of interaction and mutual learning among farmers, scientists and technical personnel, can effectively develop sustainable agriculture (Pretty, 2002: 52). Taking into account the experiences of the management of Conservation Units and the Integrated Environmental Management Plan, the *ProAmbiente* proposal incorporates popular participation and people-centred needs and priority approaches in its implementation. It presents platforms at state and local levels that encourage participatory planning through new forms of interaction to negotiate the use of resources.

The programme proposal is innovative in its origin as producers themselves propose it. At the same time, this programme is a challenge because it is used to modify the behaviour of family-based producers to help contain deforestation.⁵⁸

In spite of all the efforts to put the *ProAmbiente* programme into practice, it still requires the participation of civil society to debate the strategies created by government. The *ProAmbiente* programme has been a new and good process of governing.

However, the term governance involves many ambiguities. Many governments, international agencies, researchers and scholars are in agreement that the development of good governance is essential for eliminating a range of problems related to public administration, policy and the community. The qualifying word

⁵⁸ Interview with MMA staff in September, Brasília, 2005.

‘good’ appears redundant since ‘governance’ is expected to indicate a collection of features that contribute to a positive outcome (Cornwall, 2000; Gaventa, 2004).

Despite the ‘democratic deficit’ that is now widely recognised, there has often been disagreement about how to respond to the voice of the poor (Gaventa, 2004; Webster and Engberg-Pedersen, 2002). However, as Gaventa argues, there is an increasing attention on strengthening the process of citizen participation specifically to focus on “how ordinary citizen exercise voice through new forms of inclusion, consultation, and mobilisation designed to inform and influence larger institutions and policies” (Gaventa, 2004: 29). There is a growing consensus on the importance of focusing on more active and engaged citizenry and at the same time, for a more effective state to deliver needed public services.

The case of the Brazilian government programme examined in this research is an example of how local people gaining power have influence on the development agenda. At the same time, this example reveals a new way of governing to find more interactive methods between the state and local communities. In this case, the interactive engagements of the different organisations put into practice their activities at local level and open up the construction of the new political space (Webster and Engberg-Pedersen, 2002: 4). Although this is a space to introduce the importance of negotiation towards the policy-making process, the nature of interaction and its outcomes need to be analysed in a specific context as well as the historical relationship that enabled the understanding of these interactions. In this circumstance, this research explores the *ProAmbiente* programme actions in a

specific space to investigate the way in which different organisations interact and their impact on one another.

Additionally, the benefits of networking should be demonstrated over a long-term relationship. However, a key principle of community development is to ensure that participation in decision making is democratic, inclusive and enables people to engage in the learning process through the involvement of the citizens in such process (Gilchrist, 2004: 25).

Section Two: The *ProAmbiente* as a New Process of Governing

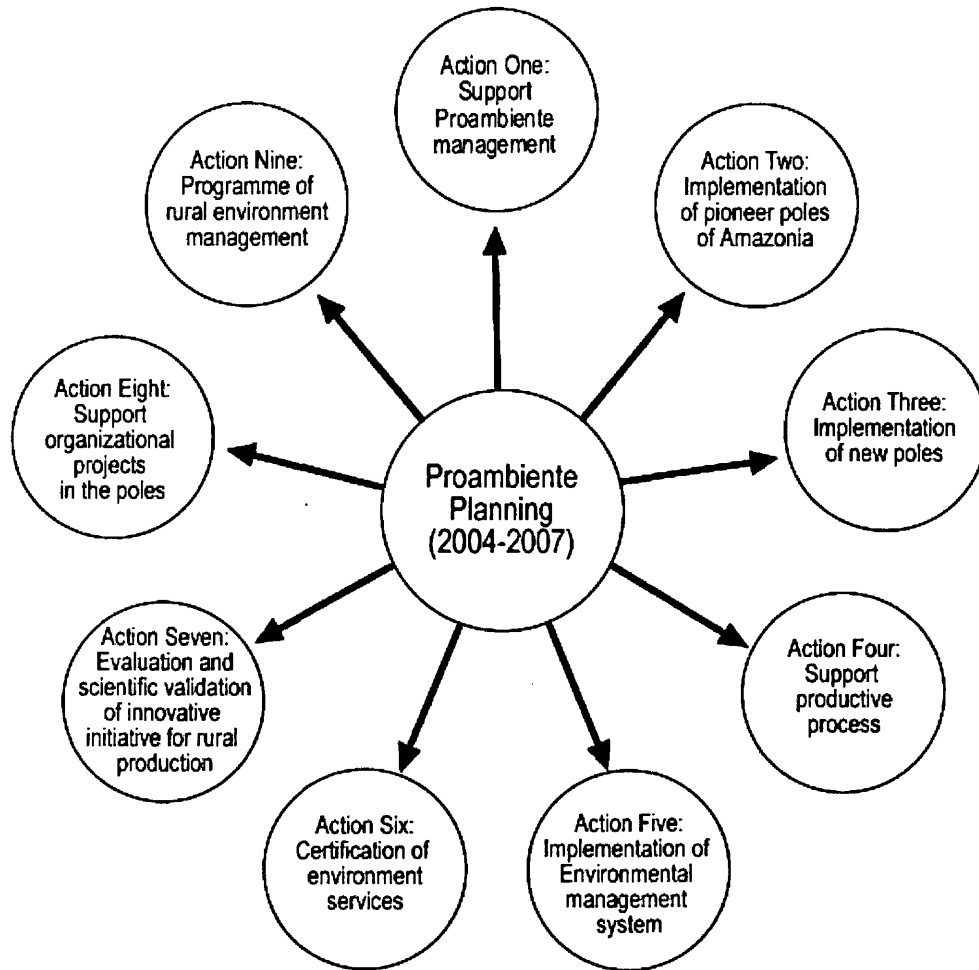
Governmental Planning (2004-2007)

The debate promoted between social movements and government sectors were important in building linkages. During the first year of the Luis Inácio da Silva government, there were intense lobbying activities at federal level to implement the *ProAmbiente* programme. Local social movements and NGOs were led by an influential leftist PT-politician with the aim to incorporate this programme into governmental plans with the influence of the Ministry of the Environment.⁵⁹ The dialogue had led to fundamental changes of federal policies in the Amazon. The new multi-annual investment plan for 2004-2007 (PPA – *Plano Plurianual*), implemented by the government from the Workers' Party - PT, strengthens the relationship with this policy.

⁵⁹ The Minister of the Environment, Marina Silva, was an environmental activist from Acre, who had joined Chico Mendes in his struggle.

Figure 4

The *ProAmbiente* Actions: 2004 to 2007



Source: Created by the Author using sources from MMA, 2005a

The *ProAmbiente* programme model is structured into nine cycles of actions (figure 4) that requires joint action between the institutions involved in the programme implementation. Even though this programme came from the grassroots movement and subsequently became a governmental programme, there are still barriers to consolidate it into public policy. The third action, the implementation of new poles, needs more work and debate in order to strengthen this programme implementation. However, the *ProAmbiente* is still an innovative proposal to influence changes in the Amazonia-space. The programme as carried out in the pole of Rio Capim has had some good results. However, the extension of the outcomes of this programme into public policy to other areas depends on investment actions, particularly for actions seven and eight Stated above, before being extended to other poles.

In reaction to the PPA, the Ministry of the Environment has prepared a new programme for a sustainable Amazonia. The programme states:

(...) it is not the economic activities or infra-structure investment as such that contribute to environmental degradation and social conflicts in the region, but the fact that they were (...) executed without careful analysis, without debate with local society and without evaluation to prevent, mitigate or solve their perverse effects (MMA, 2003: 7).

The document goes on stating that all public investment should be preceded by preventive measures in order to minimize adverse social and environmental impacts. It continues by saying that although these rules:

(...) seem to suggest a number of restrictions to the maintenance and enlargement of public infrastructure in the Amazon, the acceptance of a participatory and more careful pattern of decision making will broaden and ensure these investments. A large part of legal obstacles which paralyse infrastructure works today will be either removed or simply not operate. Moreover, the guarantees for sustainability and transparency implicit in the procedures for decision making will facilitate the participation of large international and multilateral funding agencies which require such guarantees” (MMA, 2003: 21).

In Brazil, there are already mechanisms to compensate *municípios* containing environmentally protection areas, through provision by the state of additional revenue from the collection of tax on the circulation of products and services (ICMS Tax). This is known as the ‘green ICMS’, an application of the idea of compensation for those who protect the environment (Born and Talocchi, 2002: 108). There is also the preservation of forested and reforestation areas as an environmental service, especially when photosynthesis captures carbon dioxide from the atmosphere to reduce the harmful effects of greenhouse gas emissions (Born and Talocchi, 2002: 109). The Kyoto Protocol in the UN Framework Conservation on Climate Change introduced the possibility of a mechanism for compensation or payment to environmental services. The Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) allows industrialized countries with greenhouse gas emission reduction targets to include the reductions they fund through third parties in their own targets (Born and Talocchi, 2002: 112).

The use of these procedures is significant to the new rules that embrace the social movements and NGOs’ influence on policy actions that generally oppose large public investment projects, as local development does not benefit from them (Born et al., 2002: 5). The *ProAmbiente* programme as a policy comprises two core concepts: participation and accountability (MMA, 2005a: 9). The central idea of participation is to give citizens a meaningful role in the local government decisions that affect

them, while accountability means that people will be able to hold local government responsible for how it affects them. Together, these two processes are what constitute components of democratic local governance (Blair, 2000; Gaventa, 2004).

The *ProAmbiente* as public policy is a significant policy action since it creates new spaces for dialogue and participation. However, it requires a great effort in transforming behaviours and attitudes of various kinds of actors in unexpected ways (Cornwall, 2000; Laderchi, 2001). The rationale behind the *ProAmbiente* is to support producers to make the transition from the traditional agriculture practices that currently prevail in the Amazonia frontier towards more diversified and sustainable agricultural and extractive practices. There is more interest in the agricultural knowledge and information systems within which farmers, researchers and technician forest agents follow new roles in the relationship (Pretty, 2002: 49). It implies that through participatory research and extension, the actors interact in the design, adaptation and distribution of new technologies.

With the increase of unsustainable land use, payment schemes for environmental services stand out as innovative instruments for the management of natural resources (Born and Talocchi, 2002: 112). Unlike existing agricultural credit programmes, the *ProAmbiente* creates an incentive for sustainable economic activities by compensating, directly or indirectly, family-based producers for good agricultural practices (MMA, 2005b: 5). This programme also combines environmental services such as forest conservation and management, reduction of forest fires and fragmentation, maintenance of stream and river margins, soil conservation, recuperation of degraded areas and biodiversity conservation (MMA, 2005b: 8).

The programme proposal is innovative from its very origin as it was proposed by producers themselves. It is a proposal constructed from rural workers and support from the social movement. Finally, they were heard by the government. Now they are part of the programme as active citizens. At the same time, this programme is difficult because it is used to modify the behaviour of family producers to help contain deforestation. The discussion is how can we work in this way to influence people to avoid deforestation? After a long debate we finally agreed that was important to give incentives for the Plan of Land Use (PU), an integrated plan to support the family units of production⁶⁰

However, the key issue of the *ProAmbiente* as public policy is the implementation of the Payment Programme for Environment Services – PES (*Programa de Pagamento de Services Ambientais*) as explained in Chapter Three. Through the use of the Plan of Land Use, the *ProAmbiente* invests in sustainable production with credit and technical support for family-based, small-scale producers that work with the ‘clean’ agricultural practices associated with the environmental services. The logic behind PES is that those who provide environmental services should be directly compensated while those who received the services should pay for their provision (MMA, 2005b: 12).

The participatory certification is based on the construction of a communitarian agreement as fundamental to the beginning of the implementation phase of the programme in each community. Every family must have a Plan of Land Use in his unit of production following the principles and values of the *ProAmbiente*. The PU indicates changes in the use of land and in the process of production. The plan is a key component for supporting credit policy (*Plano de Utilização da Unidade de Produção*, 2005b: 6)

This demonstrates that programme and institutional linkages that involve successful of actions require investing in linkages with policy processes and institutions. Linkages should connect the micro-, meso- and macro-levels and ensure learning and information sharing at all levels (Toner and Franks, 2006).

The PUs of the same pole must be integrated to form a Territorial Plan, which uses local analysis of local knowledge about the environment and processes of production. It means that the definition of a territorial plan provides the base for sustainable development of the pole (MMA, 2005b: 7).

⁶⁰ Interview with MMA staff in November 2005.

However, the case study presented in Chapter Seven demonstrates that a range of circumstances involves restrictions of land use. The key point is to question whether the creation of conservation units would be beneficial or not in terms of the possibilities and effectiveness of PU for local communities. Some aspects could be advantageous in these legally protected areas even with varying levels of protection. For example, for communities that traditionally live in these areas, the creation of Conservation Areas could be a serious obstacle to their participation in PU methods (Born *et al.*, 2002: 134). The reason is that, even in cases in which the private ownership of territories or resources is clearly defined, it is difficult to establish in practice the relation between the “producers” of the environmental services and their beneficiaries (Born *et al.*, 2002: 135)⁶¹ not even the right to remain on the land where people live is guaranteed. This diminishes the possibility of these communities receiving benefits for environmental services, and at minimum it undermines their chances of “demanding” such compensations as their legitimate right (Born and Talocchi, 2002: 124).

In the Rio Capim area researched, for example, there is political support at various levels and spheres (civil society, government, NGOs) for the implementation of a PES. However, certain obstacles in the interaction with the government of Pará have prevented strengthening interests in supporting demands for socio-environmental compensation. The divergent political interests between different levels of government have blocked governmental actions in Pará. However, the new government⁶² that has gained power in the 2006 election in the Pará, has established

⁶¹ See Born *et al.*, (2002) for more details in the implementation of the CES in Acre there was political support at various levels. At the same time, there was also a legal basis in the form of the Chico Mendes Law (State Law 1277/99), which is important for distributing financial resources from the government to the rubber tappers.

⁶² The PT governor Ana Júlia Carepa came to power in the state level elections.

a good relationship with the federal government to strengthen the policy for local level communities.

The Scaling Up of Political Influence

The Brazilian government incorporation of the *ProAmbiente* programme was a significant decision in implementing policy development at local level. This dimension of community involvement has added to the policy and its effect is likely to change the approach on which public policy is based. As well as community being a central part of the public policy agenda, it also has significant implications for the roles of policy operations and strategies. It means that the new policies require public organisations to challenge the traditional culture of professional bureaucracy and create a capacity for change oriented to a new culture of serving and empowering the public.

Despite the linkage with local level organizations and their federations in scaling up political influence over state policy, the issue remains as to how the *ProAmbiente* created the capability to gain “access to political decision making” (Nelson and Wright, 1995: 9) to interact with other governmental institutions. From these relations *ProAmbiente* is likely to offer opportunities for citizens to participate in the creation of a public space for local people and federal government interaction.

Although the Ministry of the Environment gave legitimacy to the *ProAmbiente* programme as public policy, a range of factors that this programme embraced appear as disarticulated activities that take place and are largely independent of any formal institutional mechanisms. In its identification of the constraining factors for effective

co-ordination of intergovernmental relations, the Ministry of the Environment highlighted the lack of an effective co-ordinating mechanism at national level. While mechanisms have been established for promoting sectoral relationship between different spheres at local level, no such mechanism appears to be operating at the government level.

I believe that the *ProAmbiente* is facing a big problem. It is now a systemic public policy that involves issues such as: territorial development, property plans, credit access, technical assistance, remuneration for environmental services, business plans and gender questions. It means that this programme includes many aspects that are not part of the same government department. We are proposing to create a space to debate all these points. The problem is that this programme is becoming too complex to have a link only with the Ministry of the Environment. They have no priorities to work with land struggles, still a big problem of the rural workers in Amazonia. The state is fixed into small and absolute boxes and there is not connection between them (...)... and the *ProAmbiente* is a complex programme that fits into a web of relations. I guess that the Brazilian model of the state is not suitable to incorporate this programme model.⁶³

The challenge increases when policy development involves changes in the diverse interests of various groups as this will confront power structures within the community (Nelson and Wright, 1995: 9).

The inter-institutional relations were very rich because we had the idea to create differential credit to support an alternative system of production. The idea of the environmental service was to be integrated as part of the credit mechanism. The idea was to create indirect remuneration. However, at the present credit is only an element of the Property Plan, and is included as one of actions of the Programme.⁶⁴

At present there is a considerable uncertainty over the precise responsibilities of the different levels of the administrative programme. For example, the relationships between and within different spheres of Brazilian government have emerged as an issue of key concern inside and between the departments that deals with the programme. This has created difficulties to implement the programme and a consequent failure to deliver articulated policy actions.

⁶³ Interview with one of the creators of the *Proambiente*, EMBRAPA-Brasília, May 2005.

⁶⁴ Interview with one of the creators of the *Proambiente*, Federal Deputy Assembly-Brasília, May 2005.

We had a long debate in changing from a project to a governmental programme and our dream came true. Yet, it is not what we really planned. The *ProAmbiente* programme is very closed and rigid. We attended a conference in France in the 90s, it was said there that the high level of deforestation of the Amazonia forest had a bad influence on people's lives such as the rural exodus, disease and other effects. The debate was centred on environmental concerns and we said there that this programme was not an environmental concern. We have tried to include production with environment factors. But we don't know if this programme will really respond to the wishes of rural workers. The proposal was clear and focused on the peasant movement and now it is becoming very complex, with many issues.⁶⁵

This programme is an innovative idea because it was the result of long debate, however many barriers appear in the execution phase.

The negative side is that the *ProAmbiente* was not what we expected. I think because it was not a priority for the government's financial plan. Another reason is that the *ProAmbiente* was introduced into the wrong ministry. I worked in the Environment Ministry and I know that this ministry has severe difficulties in debating the production factors. I think that there is a dichotomy between production and environment but we need to overcome this because this is a production programme, not only a conservation programme.⁶⁶

The debate on inter-institutional relations was an important issue in the debate in building the programme. The idea was to create differential credit to support an alternative system of production. This proposal from the environmental service could be integrated as indirect remuneration as part of the credit policy. The debate about the creation of the *ProAmbiente* began in 1990, as a result of the social movement's proposal to link credit for family-based agriculture. Although the financial credit policy was addressed to small agriculturists, it was adapted to suit large business interests.

The long debate to build the *ProAmbiente* put forward support for small agriculturists to receive financial credit, but they also needed the infrastructure to produce and to bring produce to market. More investment is necessary to support small workers to have access to markets especially for those with no knowledge of this. In a region with many problems in producing and selling produce, rural workers have been lost and it is worse than before when they did not have the credit.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Interview with manager of the FANEP NGO, Capanema in Pará, September 2005.

⁶⁶ Interview with a creator of the *Proambiente* proposal, September 2005.

⁶⁷ Interview with a creator of the programme proposal, Brasília, September 2005.

A fundamental challenge for local organizations is to influence the cultural and knowledge resources developed by their diverse organizational units. Such resources or knowledge are an important source of organizational success; however they are often difficult to expand. The programme has to cope with many kinds of difficulties in exchanging resources with other organizations.

Several contributions have drawn attention to the community and how these are informing and creating a different context in which management has to operate (Banks, 2003). The debate about the problems that local people are facing in a specific space such as the pole of Rio Capim is important. They are not only advocating credit access but also policies to secure their lands. Although local people have access to credit it needs to be redirected for their needs and to be more in line with other rural development policies.

The incorporation of culture in development policy is to focus on people's and communities' capacities and patterns of inequality that present obstacles to more equitable and sustainable development. Although the *ProAmbiente* programme is ongoing as a public policy there still remains the challenge to change a dominant focus based on economic growth. A community level dimension has been added to management and its effects are likely to change the theory or approach on which public management is based (Berardo, 1999; Banks, 2003).

Even though community is a central part of the management policy agenda, it has significant implications for the roles of operational and strategic managers. These new policies require public organisations to challenge the traditional culture of professional bureaucracy to create a change in orientation. As Rogers (2006) argues,

the challenge however lies in developing collective understanding, and incorporation, within and between scientists, citizens and management agencies. The current idea of scientists as experts who solve environmental problem is fallacious. From this point of view, a broad societal act in response, held up by public service agencies and scientists in the service of society, is more realistic to succeed (Rogers, 2006: 270). However, this in turn leads to a new culture of empowering the public sphere.

The idea of the Ministry of the Environment is to expand the programme to Amazonia as a whole, but first it needs to be strong at least in the pilot Programme area. This is the best way forward because the government has the ability to carry out this proposal and to expand to other ecosystems such as *caatingas*, *serrado*, and *mata atlântica*. The interaction of the programme with local community depends on the interaction with other organisations that are acting at local level. For example, when FANEP contacts other communities, the focus of the programme, ranges of contacts and arrangement have to be accounted for before starting. If, for any reason we do not invite one organisation to meet at the community, they say that the result of the work is highly criticised. The programme actions are a great challenge for us {FANEP NGO}, since it requires many democratic exercises. Keep in mind that we work together with different types of organisations and that we had difficult relationship with them before Lula's government⁶⁸.

The *ProAmbiente* as a governmental programme has a long and much-discussed purpose to protect the environment. However, it has incorporated a productive aspect, which introduces a debate on the complexity of policy models. Although the original proposal of the programme focused on the importance of creating new models for the state, or another new form of governance (Devas and Grant, 2003; Cornwall, 2004; Gaventa, 2004), the reality of the programme as public policy requires ample debate for these added changes.

We think that the programme proposals are an innovative idea because it was the result of long debate, but there is an obstacle to its execution. It is a problem because we combined traditional debates on credit needs and land struggles with debate on GTA's sustainable development idea. The result was satisfactory because it is rich, systemic, political and is based on Brazilian reality. However, there is not a tradition of working together in federations. I think that the *ProAmbiente* could work better with the *Ministério do Desenvolvimento Agrário* - MDA (Ministry of Agrarian Development). It could be an 'umbrella' model, or a large national programme.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Interview with the manager of the FANEP NGO, Capanema *município* in Pará, September 2005.

⁶⁹ Interview with a former manager of the programme, August 2005.

As many authors have argued, networks of inter-organizational linkages are effective for sourcing and transferring knowledge that leads to competitive advantage (Tura, 2000a; Costa, 2000). However, effort has been devoted to the study of firm-specific resources and knowledge; there is less systematic understanding of the dynamic process of inter-unit resource exchange or knowledge sharing.

The field work of this thesis has taken a static view by focusing on the stable design of exchange among organizational units among those organisations involved in the programme. For example, the FANEP NGO has implemented its actions in the pole of Rio Capim; however, support is still needed from other development agencies that take part in the programme actions. The structure of the organizations can be conceptualised as a network arrangement consisting of a set of relational ties linking together dispersed organizational units (Blair, 2000; Robb, 2002). Based on this conceptualisation, interactions, including communication and resource channels among different elements of an organization to be analysed using a network perspective.

Conclusion

This study concentrates on the strategies of the *ProAmbiente* programme to change from a macro-level policy to a micro-level one that focuses on local people's livelihoods. It reflects the trajectory of the Brazilian government in taking part in the sustainability debate as well as the coming to power of the 2003 government. With the left-wing parties in the new government, some of the actors that supported rural workers had the power to create the *ProAmbiente* proposal. It changed its direction from a grassroots project to a governmental programme, and it is now under transition to a public policy. However, as a governmental programme, the *ProAmbiente* has a long complex route to travel in order to have a significant impact at local level. In spite of all efforts to transform the programme into public policy, it needs more governmental actions. The problem is that the programme actions are involved in many disconnected actions. As the programme come from grassroots organisations and rural workers, the proposal include issues such as land struggles, the landless movement and migration. These issues are present, isolated or combined, depending on the local level reality of the Amazonia space.

Chapter Six

Intermediary NGOs for Linkages between Government and Community

Introduction

This chapter examines the roles of intermediary NGOs in governmental programmes and local level communities. The focus is on two NGOS that act as intermediaries in areas of the *ProAmbiente* programme in Pará: FANEP in Rio Capim and FASE in Marajó. The role of NGOs through government programmes and policies is particularly important since they provide a realm in which society interacts constructively with the state (Whaites, 2000: 127). The intermediary level provide a better understanding of practices that the FASE and FANEP as NGOs have established through their dynamic interactions with the *ProAmbiente* programme and local communities. The emphasis on these NGOs' aims is to identify the strategies that contribute to establish and strengthen their interactions.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section focuses on the areas of debate where NGOs are emphasised as intermediary organisations. The second section introduces the FASE and FANEP as intermediary organisations in the *ProAmbiente*. The third section focuses on FANEP in its role as an intermediary organisation in the pole of Rio Capim.

Section One: Why the Focus on Intermediary NGOs?

NGOs are a key component of a civil society (Carrol, 1992; Hailey, 2001) and they have an important role as an intermediary at different stages of action. Although NGOs have operated at all levels, the new model of service provision needs to operate within the government sector as a new model of service provision and scaling up can be achieved (Edwards and Hulme, 1997: 15). Greater organisational constraints within government mean that only limited lessons can be learned from pilot projects implemented by NGOs.

The debate is whether their role should be to strengthen the civil society. Should they work on capacity building and institutional development for good governance or should they be more focused on the provision of specific services or resources (Hailey, 2001). As Clark and Thomas (2006: 418) point out, the scaling up of NGO activities and impacts can be attempted in different means of influence such as through national and international levels.

The intermediary NGOs are capable of opening up channels of communication and participation to allow the local people a voice in the character of the project (White, 2000: 145). However, the acceptance of legitimate NGOs depends on their connections to, or usefulness for, local constituencies (Edwards and Hulme, 1997: 16).

The enhanced role of these NGOs as representative organisations (Jordan and Tuijl, 2002:100)⁷⁰ from civil society has become interconnected with the state. For local people to become economically self-reliant, they are now increasingly dependent upon support from local communities in their social and political attempts to create and access meaningful links between the state and structures of local organizations. It means they can change the structures of governance in favour of democratisation and institutional accountability (Tendler, 1997; Fowler, 2002). The increasing dependency on NGOs to deliver development to act as an intermediary level suggests that a clear understanding of their role in the process of local participatory development is significant.

The human rights and development side, the NGOs have begun to look beyond their national borders and to take account of civil society counterparts in other countries (Bebbington and Farrington, 1997; Fowler, 2002). In this way, intermediary NGOs strengthen sectors of civil society to become more potent political forces in their own right, engaging in policy actions to create a political space to make the interactive participation of the local communities possible. Bebbington and Farrington (1997: 49), for example, identified that the links between NGOs and government from studies across Africa, Asia and Latin America, have been useful to support agricultural technology development and the dissemination of services in development management.

⁷⁰ See more Jordan and Tuijl (2002:100). They argue that NGOs have manifested as a new political reality in the global realm since NGOs have come to mobilize, articulate and represent people's interests or concerns at different levels of decision making – locally, nationally and internationally.

As Clarke and Thomas (2006: 420) show, an alternative way of viewing NGOs is in terms of their role in governance. As NGOs gain increased centrality and acceptance in the development field, they have faced real opportunities for influencing policy and undertaking development actions on a much large scale (Clark, 1997: 191). In any case, intermediary NGOs plays a key role to influence change amongst the poor and are often thought to bring with them a certain amount of autonomy and operational flexibility to develop encounters with state institutional structures (Clark, 1997: 191).

Whaites (2000: 128) argues that the term 'civil society' is widely used as a noun, and it is used here in this way to refer to a set of institutions and relationships that affect the balance of power between state and citizens in favour of the latter. However, this is not simply a zero-sum relation, where more power for citizens means automatically less for the state, and vice versa. Depending on the aims and performance of state institutions, their strength can contribute to what is thought of as civil society (Whaites, 2000; Lister, 2000).

There are several promising directions for analysis of the intersections between micro, intermediary, and macro, between meaning and structure, and between movements' internal words and their external contexts. However, the researcher focuses on the construction of a movement's organization and on strategies for interactions. It means that the role of an organisation depends on the reality where they act, the type of linkages that they have with the state and the level of relationship that contributes to strengthen the community (Lister, 2000; Gilchrist, 2004) Examinations of the relationships between state and the civil society that follows show the way in which the rural social movement and NGOs engage with the

state. Yet, this correlation is for mutually agreeable endeavours rather than simply opposing the state or to retain complete autonomy from it.

In this way, two examples of intermediary NGOs are illustrated in this chapter to understand its practices among the *ProAmbiente* for local level in Pará, they are FANEP and FASE. The focus on NGOs is on understanding the political space created by the Brazilian government and its impacts on communities at local level. It is argued that role of NGOs and their practices in a specific local context are important to understand their practices as intermediaries and their impact on local people's livelihoods.

Section Two: Organisational Practice at Intermediary Level between Government and Local Level: The Experience of FASE

FASE: Profile and Practices

The relationship between FASE and the Brazilian government reveals a range of interaction patterns. This NGO operates relatively autonomously in its interaction with some sectors of civil society that have opposite interests from the state. Both state and movement structures are constructed around ideological symbolic imperatives, as well as those of power and resources. Conversely, States and movements produce meanings such as identity and discourses within structural contexts (Whittier, 2002: 292). For example, the background of FASE in Pará reveals a long-term relationship with the social movements FETAGRI, FASE, CPT, CNBB and scientific organisations such as IPAM and EMBRAPA. The interaction that arose between these organisations pressurized the Brazilian governments who often did not accept these organizations' legitimacy. The FASE has contributed technical and political support to strengthen civil society, which has had political implications. The trajectory of this NGO in Brazil is different from the route that is often identified in the vision of Western donor agencies to turn 'civil society' into a project rather than a process (Pearce, 2000: 34). The different phases of the NGO process show the strategies used to straighten the civil society. FASE has a long history of supporting local people and social organisations in conflict situations in both urban and rural Brazil. However, FASE's work is not a linear process, on the contrary; the NGO's trajectory faces constant construction and reconstruction.

This organization has worked for a long time side-by-side with the small rural workers in Amazonia since the 60s. At that time, the Amazonian rural territory experienced different forms of negative impacts and there were different forms of opposition pressure too. (...) We supported the grassroots social movement (...). Actually, we have worked in a close relationship with both the government and small-scale rural workers, at an intermediary level. (...) In fact, we did not support top-down actions they are contrary to our interests⁷¹.

There are four broad phases of FASE practices. The first, in the 60s concentrated on rural community issues; during the military government it became part of the government opposition through its support of the worker unions and social movements in rural areas.

The second phase began with a focus on economic and social inequality through the 70s. One of the practices was support for rural and urban workers that were lobbying for political changes. The earlier role of NGO growth, in the 1970s, particularly in Latin America, is attributed to, along with other factors to a theology of liberation in the Catholic and Protestant churches (Meyer, 2002: 22). It was influenced by the consciousness-raising work of Paulo Freire. Left-learning professionals, who were under pressure from authoritarian and military regimes, began to use non-governmental organizations as a means of furthering their political goals. The earlier generation of NGOs were often critical of their governments, and were different in form and nature from what later became the NGO sector or part of the NGO movement.

In the 80s, seen as the third phase, FASE contributed to disseminate ideas of the democratic transition of Brazil through direct elections (*eleições diretas*) for president. In this decade, international public attention was drawn to the social and ecological costs of the Brazilian development strategy on Amazonia, especially after

⁷¹ Interview with the NGO co-coordinator, April 2005

the murder of the rubber tapper Chico Mendes in 1988. A characteristic of this third phase was the support for local social movements. In this period, community organizations have achieved political power as a result of some of the organisations in the past and also for their close association with political parties or religious organisations.

In the fourth phase, from 1990 onwards, the role of the FASE was predominately centred on development educational methodologies for popular control and participative citizenry in rural and urban areas (Tura, 2000a: 31). FASE became more focused on issues such as: social and environmental development, support for movements of afro-descendents and indigenous women, and also campaigning against inequalities in general such as economics, social and cultural human right. Although keeping the focus on natural resource protection and sustainable development, it still maintained close relationships with social movements and local people such as peasants, fishermen, indigenous peoples and those of former slave backgrounds. It implies that the relationship with the state included protesting against the authorities' actions to influence state policy, mainly related to land struggles in rural Amazonia.

The practices of FASE at different levels range from the local level to the government level through social movements that are marked by tense relationships. The authoritarian characteristics of the Brazilian government were responsible for decades of opposition by the civil society against the state, as was analysed in Chapter Three. FASE constructed a long-term connection with the social movement and left-wing parties against government policies. The types of interaction between FASE, social movements and left-wing parties demonstrate a strong connection in

terms of proposals for rural changes. FASE, the left-wing parties and social movement network created in the past are now the motive of the relationship between the federal government and FASE to support family production in Pará. However, it is difficult to separate the cultural and material dimensions of this policy because the processes through which movements and their contexts shape each other are complicated as influence flows in both directions.

The participants in social movements constantly negotiate collective identities; political change can articulate the content and direction of these negotiations in the absence of significant internal change (Robnett, 2002: 271). For example, in the present Brazilian government (2003-2006), FASE has streamlined its interaction with the government to put into practice a policy development to focus on communities at local level. The ProAmbiente programme is an element of this interaction among a range of organisations that are involved at local level. Although other organisations and NGOs are on an equal footing in the ProAmbiente, the recognised importance of FASE is the result of a long-term relationship with local communities' interests.

FASE worked 15 years here in the north-east of Pará and it was important to build and strengthen the agricultural union movement. During the long interaction with social movements, this organisation grew and changed its focus from grassroots organisations to work mainly on practices linked with public policies.⁷²

FASE built a close relationship with local organisations, local government and local people from the north-east of Pará. It was an interactive process as part of continuing development involving many changes. For example, FASE strengthened the interactions of civil society and contributed to create FANEP to work at grassroots level in the north-east of Pará. After the creation of FANEP, FASE finished direct

⁷² Interview with the co-ordinator of the NGO, April 2005.

work in the north-east of Pará but all the infrastructures was adapted to sustain FANEP's work in other parts of the state.

FASE as an Intermediary in the Pole of Marajó

FASE is responsible for the programme actions in the pole of Marajó, which includes fishing activities.

The pole of Marajó took part in the *ProAmbiente* programme at the request of local and national organisations that support the fishing industry. The government met the request of the civil society to incorporate Marajó Island as a pole in the programme. But there are some problems that need to be adjusted. (...) The *ProAmbiente* is an important programme that emerged after long debate between those organisation and individuals with interests and links with small agriculture development. It is modelled on agricultural activities and Marajó Island is mainly composed of the fishing industry {...}...⁷³

The interactions between FASE and local level communities were initially established with RESEX organisations that were working with local communities in the Marajó Island marine reserve. Although FASE has extensive experience with social movements and left-wing parties, the relationship with fishing resources production and cultural identity has been more recent. The strategies to create the interaction with Marajó Island have been established through the *ProAmbiente*. However, new strategies have to be created to find ways to impact the engagement of institutions on local communities.

Interaction with Local Communities

The Marajó field work research was undertaken with links from FASE and other organisations involved at local level, mainly with cultural and fisheries resources. The researcher identified that RESEX was key in providing the contacts needed to interact at local level. RESEX is an important support structure in the Marajó pole

⁷³ Interview with co-ordinator of FASE, Pará, November 2004.

national marine reserve. Although RESEX is a conservation area, it supports all of the population that lives in this area and supports the existing traditional fishing practices and ecological conditions despite of the diversity of the fishing activity involved, such as crab and molluscs fishing.

(...) It is a conservation reserve with 1,500 people living here. Fishing activity is diverse including prawns, crabs, and other things in our environment. As we live in an island, there are lots of rivers around the communities.⁷⁴

The creation of the reserve came about from pressure from local people and its relationship with the *Centro Nacional de Populações Tradicionais e Desenvolvimento Sustentável* – CNPT (Traditional Populations and Sustainable Development National Centre) to manage the reserve area resources. Although the fishing industry is still rich in its diverse environments, it is seen as a complex task to manage. It is important to recognise the role of local leaders and the associations in the communities that they act in.

The marine reserve was created after some conflicts between local crab fishermen and fishermen from other *municípios*. For example, the fishermen from other localities acquired new skills to catch 700 crabs per day while local fishermen had a catch of 70 crabs per day.⁷⁵

Biological diversity and coral cover were reduced greatly in all areas of the Salgado zone compared to other fished or fully protected marine parks or reserve sites established by the national government. Presently, traditional management is not effective in protecting species diversity or ecological functions, which was probably never the intention of the fishermen. In spite of the existence of the *Instituto Brasileiro do Meio Ambiente e Recursos Naturais Renováveis* - IBAMA (Brazilian Institute for the Government and Renewable Natural Resources) to protect the

⁷⁴ Interview with a member of the Resex and CNS (Conselho Nacional dos Seringueiros).

⁷⁵ Interview with environmental protection officer, IBAMA, April 2003.

environment of this area, extractive practices have had an environmental impact on the marine ecosystem in the *município* of Soure.

We have worked here [*município* of Soure] more with fishermen. Our work is mainly forest protection against deforestations and extraction and wood transport but I can say that our work in this area involved 70% or 80% with fishermen.⁷⁶

The role of IBAMA as a governmental institution is to control fishing mechanisms and fishing stock according to current regulations. However, the official rules and norms contrast with the culture practices of the traditional fishermen that live in remote communities on the island.

In the past, IBAMA use to work with the environment protection and controlled the *terra de varzea*⁷⁷ deforestation, river pollution and unsustainable fishing activities. We had an educational programme to use resources in a sustainable way but this project finished when IBAMA stopped. At present, the Secretaria Executiva de Estado de Agricultura - SAGRI (Regional Secretary of Agriculture) is responsible for these issues. But the problem is that this organisation gives more attention to agriculture and ranching. In fact, as there are rivers everywhere, they think that the resources will never end. The majority of local fishing development here {Soure} is not professional. They need to pay the annual tax to the Capitania dos Portos (Marine Traffic Office) but they don't pay it. They also need to register with the Departamento Geral de Pesca - RGP (General Fishing Department) located in Instituto Brasileiro do Meio Ambiente - IBAMA (Brazilian Institute for the Environment and Renewable Natural Resources), and they don't know what it is⁷⁸.

This area has one of the most elaborate cultural traditions concerning customs and rituals of life linked with the environment. However, the unsustainable fishing activity has affected all local people and agencies of the state. The conflict between governmental organizations and local fishing activity arises because some resource users are concerned that the management proposed by the national organizations will eventually lead to the total loss of access to, and control of the resource.

The fishermen have no rules to carry out their activity because they assume the fish will never finish. I think they need environmental education to learn the rules to develop this activity. They have the knowledge to carry out the activity but they have no knowledge about the law and rules that the fishery activity is involved in.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ Interview with environmental protection movement officer, IBAMA, April 2003.

⁷⁷ Land near the river subject to flooding.

⁷⁸ Interview with an Environment Protection Officer from IBAMA, May 2003.

⁷⁹ Interview with an environmental protection officer, IBAMA, May 2003.

There is a need to resolve conflicts concerning mechanisms of use and regulation, and a need to increase awareness of the expectations and management programmes among the national and local organizations. Many of the traditional forms of management are compatible with the policies of national organizations, but conflicts occur concerning enforcement and its benefits. To solve these conflicts, discussions are required between traditional and national fishing leaders to develop mutually acceptable policies that enhance and share management power.

As a member of this organization, I have worked by side with the Pedral community and this is also the community where I live. Initially, we were working to strengthen the collective way of life in order to focus on political organisation. We have already created one community association to increase our capacity to get community development projects. We have great natural resources here in Pedral community such as fish and fruit but we are very poor because we do not have enough income, schools and hospitals.⁸⁰

These communities based on family groups are inter-connected for long generations and have close relationships with the island's environment ecosystem. In the *município* of Soure, local people live on fishing activities; however they are also involved in other activities such as agricultural and extractive activities. For example, there are 24 families in the community of Pedral and of the 109 people there, 95% live off fishing.⁸¹

The communities are organised according to their cultural identity and knowledge resources that are linked with all practices around their livelihood. In communities situated on beach locations such as the community of Pesqueiro, they work with natural material to create exotic handmade furniture as a way to recycle natural material.

⁸⁰ Interview with a member of CNS (*Conselho Nacional dos Seringueiros*), Soure *município*, May 2003.

⁸¹ Interview with the co-ordinator of RESEX in Marajó Island.

For the river-side communities in the areas of *terra de varzea* their predominant activities are collecting fruits, crabs and natural medicine.

Here in this community we live on fishing but we also live on regional fruit such as *cupuaçu*, *pupunha*, *bacuri*, *açaí*, and natural medicine that we get from the Amazonia forest such as *copaiba* and *andiroba*. We produce goods to eat and to sell (...) the income generated is to buy other things that we can not produce here.⁸²

Although the *ProAmbiente* is in a stagnant phase in the pole of Marajó, the local population is anxiously looking forward for the programme continuation. The first actions of FASE in carrying out the PRA⁸³ in this pole included working with fishermen and other organisations that are active at local level such as the CNS and RESEX organisations.

If the *ProAmbiente* is to work with the fisherman, I have to say that it is a very complex relationship as they are used to working alone. They don't think in terms of environmental problems or regulations. For example, if they receive money to buy a boat, supply oil, etc, they will need a licence to fish and they don't know which institution is responsible for it. In fact, they never were concerned about the role of institutions that have worked with or that have been involved with the fishing industry.⁸⁴

The inclusion of Marajó Island into the *ProAmbiente* programme is in response to pressure from the national fishermen's unions that lobbied some sectors of civil society and NGOs present at local level. However, the interviews in the *município* of Soure identifies that the *ProAmbiente* is not recognised by local fisherman and the *Colônia dos pescadores* (Fishermen's Union). Although sectors of fishing activity have certainly opened up to the programme, their understandings of its engagement are limited to individual credit access rather than being active participants in the programme action.

⁸² Interview with a household in the community of Pedral, May 2003.

⁸³ The first phase of the programme in the pole of Marajó was carried out in the *município* of Soure with participation of social organisations and local people.

⁸⁴ Interview with an environmental protection officer, IBAMA, April 2003.

It is important that the federal government supports the fishing industry with financial support, however first they need educational policies because there are fishermen that receive money but they don't know the best way to use it. The financial policy for fishing rather than a sustainable support to develop this activity means it has been difficult to carry out.⁸⁵

Individual credit for fishermen needs to be more sustainable too. The role of FASE to build an organisational capacity and/or support the local organisations should be the main aspect to be considered as strategies for the legitimacy of local level claims. Based on several cases studies, Edwards and Hulme (2000: 60) argue that strengthening local initiatives and lobbying for policy change may be mutually reinforced. However, agencies should ensure that they are taking full advantage of such potential synergy.

Marajó pole is considered a very important addition in the *ProAmbiente's* actions because the local communities there are families of small-scale fishermen and they are very poor. However, they don't live in a collective way of life, unlike the North-east rural workers who have strong rights movements. It is difficult to solve issues as an individual. FASE have promoted workshops to encourage debate between them but it is still a challenge for us.⁸⁶

This research suggests that the focus on fishermen in the governmental programme is a complex task to be considered since it requires stronger interaction between the programme and fishermen organisations. In these circumstances, the actions of the programme in pole of Marajó depend on encouraging processes of collective participation and decision making among programme members, NGO staff and local people. In this case, more research is needed to explore such relationship and the conditions which encourage their development.

⁸⁵ Interview with a co-ordinator of the Fishermen's Union.

⁸⁶ Interview with co-ordinator of FASE, Pará, September 2005.

Section Three: Organisational Practices at Intermediary Level between Government and Local Level: The Experience of FANEP

FANEP: Profile and Practices

FANEP was created in 1997 to work in the north-east region of Pará State. The idea for the creation of FANEP came from people working at FASE. FASE was involved in the region for decades. However, this NGO decided to move out from this area and which then led to the creation of a new organisation to work directly at local level.

When FASE moved out of the region we had the idea to create a new organisation that could work directly with local people. FASE was acting mainly at the policy level. The idea was to build another organisation to follow the FASE mission but with direct commitment with the communities. FANEP is a small organisation composed by only 1 pole coordinator, six technicians and 17 field agents. This organisation sustains itself from projects and from the contributions of agriculturist associations.⁸⁷

FANEP was created to act at local level, however the linkages that it has with FASE and other organisations of the federal government has contributed to its inclusion in the *ProAmbiente* programme. To implement the programme actions, the FANEP works as an intermediary NGO between national government, local people and local organisations in the pole of Rio Capim. The relationship between this NGO and government reveals a range of interaction patterns which NGOs operate autonomously, with the international agencies' financial support and governmental funding.

⁸⁷ Interview with the co-ordinator of FANEP, north-east of Pará in September, 2005.

FANEP's Work as an Intermediary Organisation in the Pole of Rio Capim

FANEP's role as an intermediary organisation in the *ProAmbiente* is to carry out the programme from planning to execution. It is a challenge because it involves commitments to the state and also to local communities. This NGO is responsible for establishing direct interaction among government and communities.

(...) I have worked with grassroots community organizations for decades but now I have the big responsibility to identify the communities' demands that are to be included in the *ProAmbiente* programme⁸⁸.

The role of the FANEP at intermediary level is to carry out development planning that is composed of four strategies. Firstly, this requires a diagnosis of the pole; secondly, to elaborate a plan according to its local base; thirdly, to create a social and environmental certificate plan; fourthly, to create incentives and to roll out a *Familiar Plano* - FP (Family Plan) that is the basis on which to build the map of use of each Plano de Utilização da Unidade de Produção - PU.

A key factor affecting relationships between NGOs, villagers and government agencies is the perception of whose side they are expected to take in disputes. Characteristically, NGOs are expected to be either pro-people or pro-government, making it very hard for NGOs to play an impartial intermediary role to enable better relationships and mutual understanding between local people and FANEP staff.

I believe that the most important feature of an organisation is the type of commitment that the NGOs have established with local people during its relationship. Another thing is the type of proposals that we offer to the community. If they identify that what we offer is of interest for them, it has a great chance of success. I believe this is the importance of the mutual trust between the NGOs and the community where they work.⁸⁹

⁸⁸ Interview with the FANEP co-ordinator – north-east of Pará, September 2005.

⁸⁹ Interview with the FANEP co-ordinator – north-east of Pará, September 2005.

One of the most difficult tasks for NGOs placed between government and local level communities is that this type of relationship is a heterogeneous one encompassing a wide range of groups with different ideological agendas (Fowler, 1997: 20). The result is that NGOs do not always successfully pressurise local elites or local governments to change the status quo instead of maintaining it. However, as is argued by Brinkerhoff (2002: 52-3), the benefits of a relationship at macro level is not without costs because many NGOs may lose their organisational identity through the process of accepting donor requests.

In order to qualify for more funding, FANEP has to send regular progress reports to the Ministry of the Environment. As most NGOs are not financially independent, every project is under pressure from the funding agencies with which they sign contracts. NGOs are required to carry out their programmes in a hurry and produce instant results to be suitable for their donors (White, 2000; Devas and Grant, 2003). The projects are often imposed on the people by NGOs with donor support.

NGO Scaling up Influence

The challenge for organizational processes is to act in response to upward pressures from funding agencies and downward pressures from community groups. NGOs may have on-the-ground contacts that enable an accurate understanding of the development context, and they can introduce this in-depth understanding into decision making (Brinkerhoff, 2002: 49). The different structures and capabilities developed by the organizations are to maintain unity and integrity in response to the bureaucratic structures and the grassroots organizations and local people.

Project Development: Interaction at Local Level

The FANEP has defined a project for working with local communities from the Rio Capim pole. The project is to put community development into practice and requires action by a number of organisations that are tied together like a chain between the resources provided and those intended to benefit from them.

Table 18

Project: Participative Actions to Build Alternatives for Sustainable Agriculture and Environment (*Agroambientais*) for the Recuperation and Preservation of the Degraded Areas in the Pole of Rio Capim, Pará

Aims	Targets
To implement sustainable experiences	To implement the agro-forestry system in 20 UFP (Units of Family Production).
	To install 4 solar radiator dryers systems to be followed by 20 UFP.
	To build up bird breeding places in 8 UFP.
To implement sustainable actions through participatory methods to recover the environment of 'legal reserves' and to protect areas of permanent preservation of environment (APP)	To recover 25 projects supported by FNO.
	To build up 80 bird breeding for bee-keeping in areas of APP.
	To implement 'natural medicine' projects in 8 UFP.
	To promote campaigns for 'environmental education' in each <i>município</i> with aim to reach 200 UFP.
To train community leaders, agro-forestry technicians, and other to be agent of the project and to develop activities to multiply the project actions	To carry out 8 mini-courses with 30 participants in each one.
	To exchange experiences between the <i>municípios</i> of the <i>pole</i> and also with people from different regions.

Source: FANEP, 2005

The project is a recognised scaling up to carry out large-scale research beyond individual communities through participatory techniques that has led to the quality of information being negotiated. As a development project is a meeting ground where external institutionalised visions of development meet local social and cultural realities, it could be an opportunity to express people's knowledge and experiences of where they live. The FANEP, for example, mediates the relationship to establish

meaningful participatory processes with local communities and have impacted on the relationship that these local NGOs experience with the authoritative bodies that control their work.

Although as Brinkerhoff (2002: 49) argues, NGOs have a flexibility that enables them to access a variety of players and gather information on those player's views and interests, the challenge is how they provide bridges between macro policies' interests and communities. How do NGOs have the flexibility to manage the bureaucracy of the state in order to work at local level?

The NGO bureaucrats may become risk averse or reluctant to bear the costs of listening to their constituencies (Hulme and Edwards 1997: 270). The FANEP members, for example, have the challenge of articulating the views of local people such as villagers, union workers, and government staff, in the Rio Capim pole.

After the failure of other NGOs in other poles of the *ProAmbiente* programme, we decided to work permanently in the Rio Capim pole with a qualified group of practitioners. Now we have carried out the phases of the programme activities with a permanent timeframe and will leave the Rio Capim pole only when the contract finishes. The FANEP has a good structure to carry on the projects to north-east where the NGO area of actions is. This place was built during the FASE activity here in the north-east of Pará.⁹⁰

The existence of the *ProAmbiente* is the result of the long-term change that emerged from bottom-up projects (see Chapter Three). The transformation from a grassroots project to a governmental programme has been an important feature since it values the collective identity at local level. Collective identity is made up of sharing the cultural capital that members acquire through the deployment of knowledge within the movement and is used to constitute themselves in their own terms (Robnett,

⁹⁰ Interview with co-ordinator of FANEP from the north-east of Pará, May 2005.

2002: 267). Through construction of collective identity processes, the social movement as sustained from grassroots organisations develops a shared cultural repertoire that is shaped by both internal and external factors.

However, any pressure on short-term changes at local level can be a barrier to the programme's success. As most NGOs are not financially independent, every project is under pressure from the funding agencies with which they sign contracts. As argued by Devas and Grant (2003: 307) NGOs are always required to carry out their programmes in a hurry and produce instant results to be suitable for their donors. For example, although the FANEP NGO receives Government funding to deliver the project to the community, one of the problems is to carry out the action at local level because there is a disconnection between local people's practices and the rigid government bureaucracy.

We have successfully implemented the phases of the programme; however, as we had a problem with operational scheme management, our time has gone. Although we don't have much time to finish the 'community agreement' (*Acordo Comunitário*), it will finish at the end of this year. We have worked hard and intensively (...) we must finish according to the government schedule.⁹¹

As an NGO's work is based on particular projects, the advocacy and institutional developmental role of NGOs means that their legitimacy is weakened (Edwards and Hulme, 2000: 45). In spite of FANEP having applied participatory methodologies to insure the local people's participation, they are pressuring to implement the 'community agreement' and to produce instant results. When the work involves participatory approaches it takes time. It is a slow process to have the agreement between all people implicated in the programme.

⁹¹ Interview with the co-ordinator of FANEP, north-east Pará in September, 2005.

(...) we have two timescales. There is one in the scheme office and another in the field. The team that are on field work are responsible for workshops. The next one will be held in Comunidade do Galho, in the *município* of Concórdia do Pará with agriculturists from four *municípios*: Mãe do Rio, São Domingos do Capim, Irituia e Concórdia do Pará.⁹²

The acceptance of increasing amounts of donor funds, which usually come with complex requirements for project appraisal, reporting, evaluation and accounting, presents even large NGOs with problems. FANEP, for example, is an NGO that receives external funds for the promotion of other projects in *municípios* of north-east Pará.

We receive financial support from the Brazilian government to work in the pole of Rio Capim but we have support from other international and national development agencies too, such as Centro Mundial Florestal - CRAF, and the American Centro Internacional de Pesquisa Florestal - CIFOR and others.⁹³

FANEP holds a significant role in the process of participatory projects mainly to actively assist and facilitate communities in developing and enhancing their skills and knowledge. However, the difference between the agency and community environment is so great that it is unlikely that intermediary organizations can respond effectively to the demands of both.

The aim of the project is to introduce participative actions and capacity skills to reduce deforestation rates and CO² emissions. The introduction of sustainable alternatives for the agro-environment is met by the monitoring environmental services in the pole of Rio Capim.⁹⁴

A project setting was defined with considerable attention on environmental issues associated with agriculture practices in the development of environmental capacities on a federal and regional level, including both environmental authorities and civil

⁹² Interview with the FANEP co-ordinator – north-east of Pará, September 2005.

⁹³ Interview with member of FANEP, May 2005.

⁹⁴ FANEP - PADEQ Project in the *pole* of Rio Capim, 2006.

society organisations such as Programa Piloto para a Proteção das Florestas Tropicais do Brasil - PPG7 (Pilot Programme for the Protection of the Brazilian Rain Forest).

The PADEQ project gave families incentives to use other systems of cultivation without burning the forest. The method enables families to work with a 'forest planning system' (*sistema de planejamento florestal*) to create a *capoeira* (secondary forest). The PADEQ forest planning system is a plan to use the forest for 10/15 years (...). It depends if each agriculturist is planning to use it. This project works very closely with the agriculturists. First of all, we have to do the initial diagnose of the area (...)⁹⁵

This NGO is acting through networks to support the development of federations of villages involved in forest protection, which had begun emerging in some pockets of the state. In its field area, it has been working with four municipalities communities.

Organisational Culture: Long-Term Change

In spite of the importance of the intermediary organisations that have been engaged in the programme, the actions of local people such as small agriculturists/farmers were determined by their participation in an organisational culture that emphasises their position in society and politics at large. Therefore, the role of the intermediary organisational is significant in strengthening interactions. However, they have to be aware that organisational attributes are a key cultural attribute to be considered in the process of their practices as intermediary organisations between the programme and local communities. A long-term relationship is required to debate issues of the needs and priorities of local people, mainly in areas where the investment in building organisational capacity is weak, such as in the pole of Marajó.

⁹⁵ Interview with technician from FANEP, May 2005.

Table 19**Type of Linkages Promoted by NGO Intermediaries**

Level of Relationship	FASE	FANEP
Federal government	Ministry of Environment	Ministry of Environment
Social organisation	CSN, RESEX, Fishermen's Union	Union Workers
Local government	—	Environment Secretary
Local people (community leaders, households)	Through RESEX practices	Communitarian agents, leaders and householders

Source: Field work research, 2005

A particular challenge is thrown up where analysis is of NGO projects and the relationships between different organisations. Resources, political opportunities, and organisational strength are important determinants in creating a social movement culture that in turn creates collective identities (Robnett, 2002: 267). If cultures of organisation matter, then the matrix of organisational cultures and their interactions, will contribute to explanations of the success or failure of particular development interventions. The FANEP project in the pole of Rio Capim has been successful but some issues have to be considered to avoid a short-term change process. The interactions among agencies with different interests and priorities will emerge in its interaction. The profile of the NGOs, the interactions among different agencies, and the meanings prioritised by groups with each agency, should be put forward, particularly meanings regarding the purpose and the role of the organisation.

FANEP recognises the need for local participation to facilitate project implementation in order to support and expand their local production resources. Nevertheless, the local people still live economically, political, and socially marginalized by a power disparity between the centralised sources of support and family units of production's knowledge. The organisational culture must remain aware of the existence of power within society where the local level is part of the

process (Bowers, 2001: 32), in which values and meanings become dominant in a development project.

The prominence of the dynamics of interaction among diverse levels of interaction leads to the understanding that knowledge can be built or constructed but it involves decisions based on power (Mosse, 2001; Kothari, 2001). Knowledge creation can be manifested in interaction situations at local-level development discourse. However, as is argued by Kothari (2001: 143), there are some articulations of power through participatory processes and in the wider context within which knowledge is produced or reproduced (Kothari, 2001: 143). It implies that for an NGO to support local communities there is a need to emphasise local knowledge rather than centralise on western science. The influence from the positivist tradition is disconnected with human or spiritual values. As is demonstrated by Bowers (2001), western values emerge from the Enlightenment, through the beliefs of high-status knowledge. The problem is that the cultural implications of this value avoid indigenous cultural traditions that obstruct 'progress' and embrace change as being inherently progressive in nature (Bowers, 2001: 39).

Conclusion

The emphasis on intermediary NGOs in the *ProAmbiente* in Pará State is to identify the practices that establish and strengthen interactions with the programme and with the local communities. In highlighting intermediary NGOs through governmental programmes one can identify the practices established by Brazilian government actions and NGOs practices in strengthening interaction in a specific context. The

analysis of the FASE and FANEP NGOs in this chapter identifies that long-term relationships were important to the establishment of the *ProAmbiente*.

The example of interaction with local people in the north-east resulted from a long-term relationship between rural organisations (see the programme background in Chapter Four) and the small-scale, agricultural workers, which contributed to build an organisational culture to pressurise the national government. This close relationship among organisations that operated at grassroots level was important to create a culture of a rural movement to lobby for improvements in local people's lives in rural areas. The creation of the *ProAmbiente* proposal faced strong opposition from the military government. The existent tension of power difference among local people, government development agencies reduced opportunities for this programme that carried out actions outside the state. However, with the present Brazilian government (from 2003 to the present), the *ProAmbiente* has changed its direction from a grassroots project to a governmental programme, supported by those engaged in its creation.

However, field work research reveals that for NGO projects to deliver on an empowerment agenda, much depends on the balance of power among the different interest groups in and surrounding the organisations that are intermediaries for the programme. In the case of FANEP, staff now have more power in this relationship, through its links with federal government. However, the focus on the workings of a decades-old organisational culture suggest that it was the lack of sharing, rather than just the power to determine the actions of others, which accounted for this situation.

Chapter Seven

Local Level: Brazilian Development Programme Action in Community Development

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the impacts of the *ProAmbiente* on the communities involved. The aim is to identify how the *ProAmbiente* interacts at local level, particularly in how it assesses people's knowledge and culture to make the programme more effective in meeting their needs (Uphoff et al., 1998: 64) and priorities. It focuses on programme strategies or impact on socio-cultural features of the community's beneficiaries of the programme.

This chapter is divided into two large sections. The first section focuses on programme action through the example of NGOs in the pole of Rio Capim, in order to understand the ways in which the *ProAmbiente* is acting on local people's knowledge. The second section examines the features of the diverse socio-cultural configurations of the areas researched.

Section One: Impact of the *ProAmbiente* Programme at Local Level

Bringing Local People to the Centre of Policy Action

An important principle of participatory development is the incorporation of local people's knowledge into programme planning (Mosse, 2001: 16). Participatory initiatives have been used to create the relationship between the *ProAmbiente*, policies and rural communities. The rationale behind this programme is to help producers make the transition from the traditional slash and burn agricultural practices that currently prevail in Amazonia frontier towards more diversified and sustainable agricultural and extractive practices while taking into account local people's knowledge, culture and demands. The *ProAmbiente* actions are carried out to encourage more sustainable economic activities by compensating, directly or indirectly, family-based producers for good agricultural practices (MMA, 2005a: 2) and to achieve economic, environment and social results. The programme action is also associated with the environmental services such as forest conservation and management, reduction of forest fires and fragmentation, maintenance of stream and river margins, soil conservation, recuperation of degraded areas and biodiversity conservation.

The key initiative of the government policy for the *ProAmbiente* is the creation of income-generating groups to direct people's interests away from ecologically precarious activities such as burning and deforestation. Even though the local people are important features of the *ProAmbiente*, the actions of this programme have concentrated on natural resources to reduce deforestation and burning.⁹⁶

However, it requires a re-approach on a conceptual category in order to consider social analysis not simply as a model of economic development but as a social sphere

⁹⁶ Interview with co-ordinator of the *ProAmbiente* Programme, Brasilia, August 2005.

in its own right (Arce, 2003: 845). The emphasis on the social provides a basis for a critical view to explore the field of action, to consider changes in the policy processes at community level. The social aspects of development have been increasingly recognised by the international development agencies⁹⁷ as of vital importance (Blair, 2000; Rao and Walton, 2004), and have become an instrumental field central to current development practice. Taking into consideration social development, the use of social knowledge⁹⁸ as a resource for policymaking has created situations to mobilize researchers and policy makers in new political alliances for engagement with practice (Fisher and Holland, 2003: 913). The emphasis on policy relevance implies that the capacity to form new relationships and linkages across institutional boundaries has to be built in order to generate a field of action across divides between social research and development practices (*op. cit.*, 912-3).

Accessing Local People's Knowledge in the *ProAmbiente*

Although the linkages at local level are the key issues to legitimising the actions of the *ProAmbiente* (see Chapter Five), what reality is accounted for to prioritise the knowledge of the local people in policy making? (Chambers, 1997b: 41).

The *ProAmbiente*, for example, has acted in the pole of Rio Capim and has been carried out by intermediary NGO participatory approaches. Through this route, the NGO promotes workshops, training and other practices, to achieve individual, family

⁹⁷ This issue has been a central concern in debates about policy action. See Rao, Walton (2004) and Klammer (2004).

⁹⁸ See Fisher and Holland (2003: 918) for more about their experience in Bolivia and Tanzania. They recognize that some academics have avoided embracing the idea of the generation of new forms of knowledge. The problem is that the commoditization of social knowledge occurs in an extreme form that has helped to consolidate certain elites in powerful positions and reinforces the academic culture.

and organisational levels. The NGO FANEP carried out a workshop in Rio Capim to access local knowledge about natural, cultural and social resources livelihoods.

The challenge for participatory approaches is the inherent tension between local categories and the degree of standardization required to enhance the validity of aggregation across different communities. As Mayoux and Chambers (2005: 279) argue, this challenge is often cited as insurmountable and a reason for preference for questionnaire surveys, however this problem is inherent in reality and is in practice avoided in most questionnaires.

In these descriptions, participatory approaches generally stand for a number of reversals: from top-down to bottom-up, from verbal to visual, from a 'blueprint' to a learning approach, from closed to open, from professional to personal (Chambers, 1997b: 42). These reversals indicate that participatory approaches subvert existing power relations through stressing the importance of so-called indigenous or local knowledge by regarding them as responsible actors and by starting from their local and personal needs and interests. These claims and representations inspired the FANEP project to adopt a participatory approach to initiate a public debate on local development issues (Robb, 2002; Webster, 2002). Participation fails when committed to reverse or subvert power relations, since it is always part of an operation of power, governing people to behave in a particular, determined way (Mosse, 2001; Banks, 2003; Webster, 2002).

Participatory research is undertaken using a diverse set of participatory tools determined by the research agenda and local context that enables local people to participate and leads to a reversal in the relationship between the community and the

outsider (Robb, 2002: 74). In the pole of Rio Capim, for example PRA exercises have been used by NGOs as an important resource to access local people's knowledge from all community beneficiaries of the *ProAmbiente*. Local people engage in group debates to identify forms of land production, resources of production and socio-economic configurations.

The group debate made by local people is a key source to focus on local people's knowledge. The local people have confidence in their own ability, and are often trying to express what they really believe and the type of resources produced by them for long generations. Effective practice requires consideration and above all sufficient time to understand the problems that local people are facing to engage in the programme effectively.

This focus on local people livelihood is an important mechanism to give priority to local demands. It is now more widely recognised that scaling up which is carried out on larger-scale research beyond individual's communities through participatory techniques has led to the quality of information being compromised (Robb, 2002: 72). It avoids the predominance of traditional uses of measurement and indicators that are usually determined by outsiders who may have limited knowledge of local people's realities (op. cit., 73). The conventional techniques supply information for specialists to construct their own accounts of what people do. However, they fail to understand people's own accounts of why they do certain things and what they do by asking them about their knowledge, beliefs and practices (Cornwall et al., 1993: 4). The critical point is that conventional experimental design prioritises technical procedures rather than the complex dynamics of interaction between local people. It obscures those who practise interactions in changing social, economic and ecological

environments through complex relations. As a homogeneous approach it is rigid and is based on a model of institutionalised knowledge derived from expert assessment and administrative criteria. The following section identifies examples of the diverse nature of the communities that take part in the programme in focus.

Policy Space: Supporting Local People's Knowledge

The *ProAmbiente* actions at local level community have maintained interactive participation through accessing local people's knowledge. With government incentives, local people carry out strategies to change their resources and assets. Strategies may vary in the policy space; however, the most important issue is to identify the local people viewpoint about their resource and how to implement policy actions to change at the same time with security and access to their resources (Engberg-Pedersen and Webster, 2002: 257). In the pole of Rio Capim, for example, the NGO influences local people's awareness, to show that they do have the knowledge about their livelihood and have contributed to reach solutions.

Local people have produced a variety and combination of resources that is the result of their daily life and are also part of their own cultural identity. Communities working closely within the project are empowered to start taking responsibility for their own development, tackling such things as building schools, organizing transportation, demanding services from the *município* and so on. The FANEP practices in Capim have contributed to strengthen the interaction among government policy development and local people. The feature of this organisation, a strong base linked with the social movement and rural workers, has been a positive approach towards engaging local people with programme actions (see Chapter Six for more

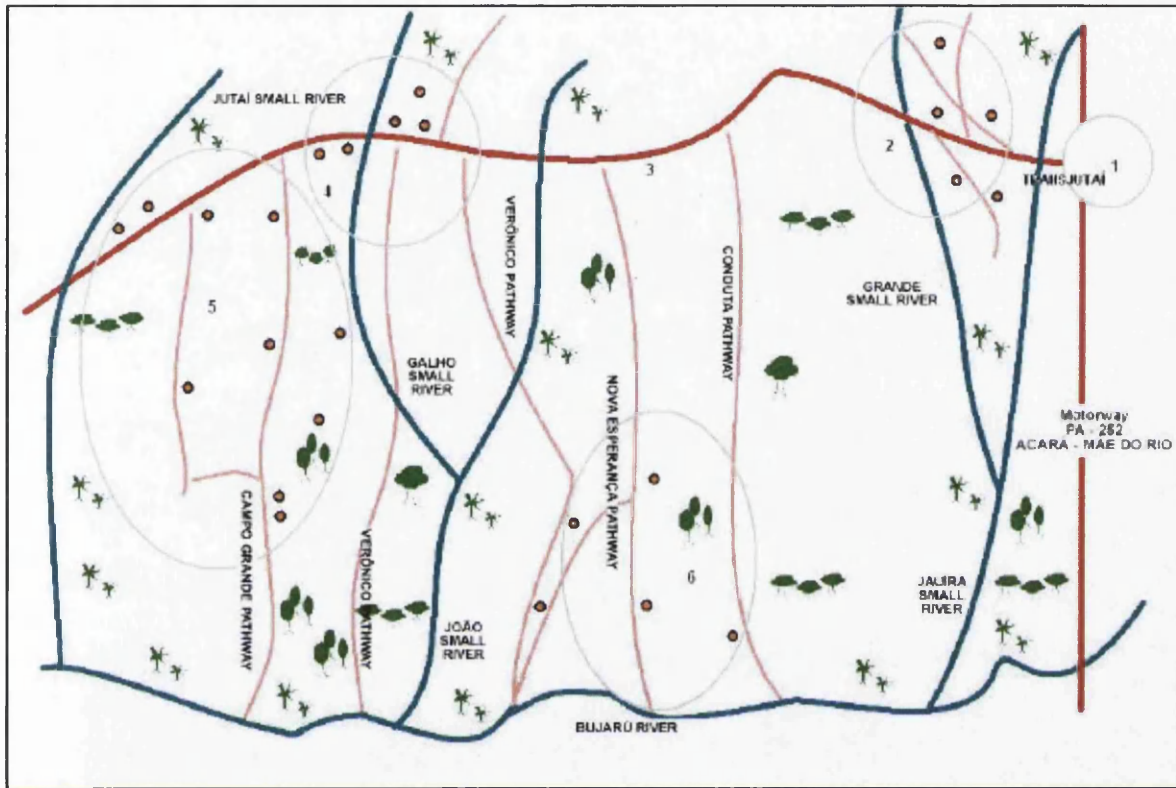
detail). Local people from Rio Capim, for example, have worked with the NGO project and they are starting to take responsibility and to become aware of their own development from learning that they are part of a system and were willing to look for solutions. However, even though interactions are part of a long-term relationship with FANEP, direct interaction with the government is a new process to be learned.

The group debate carried out by FANEP staff in the pole of Rio Capim was significant in showing an understanding of family organisations in each area where the programme operates. Local people have used drafts and other sources to show how their life in Rio Capim is organised. It made possible an understanding of how production is structured and how family and production are integrated.

To complement FANEP's work, this researcher worked with figures from community leaders using their logic of production and land use. From this exercise it was possible to gain an understanding of community (figure 5) and family organization (figure 6).

Figure 5

Communities Involved in the *ProAmbiente* in Concórdia do Pará



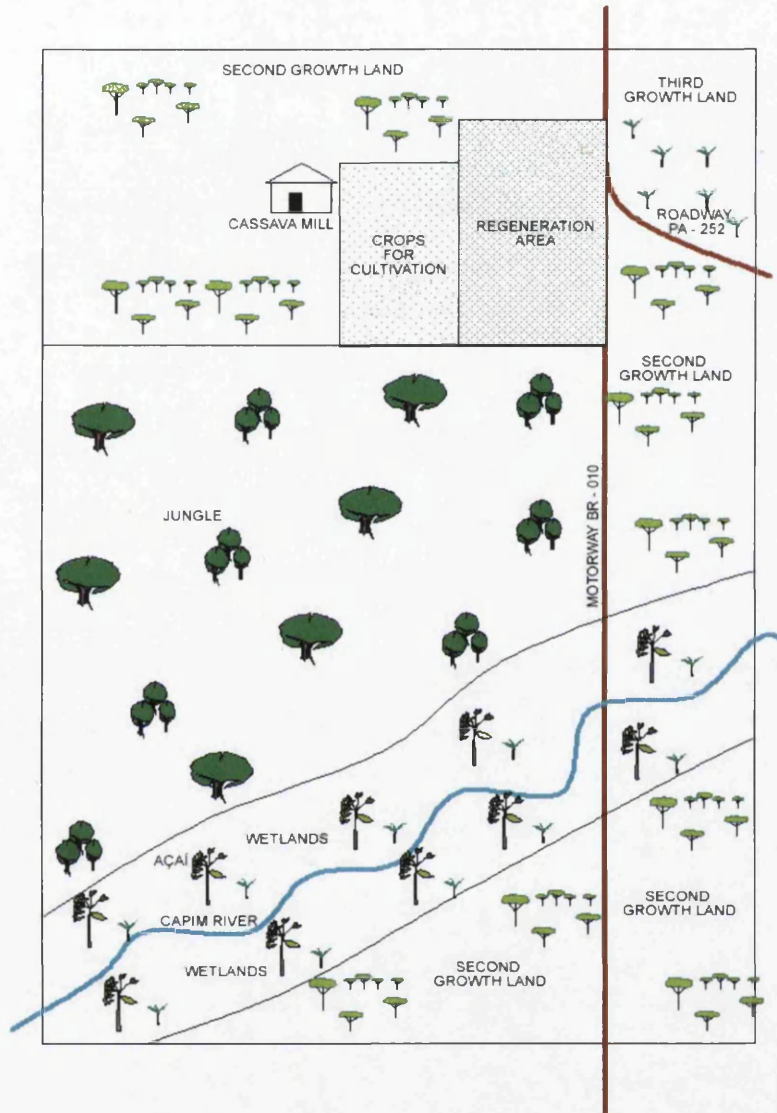
Source: Field Work, 2005 (this figure was created in the focus group carried out during research in the Vila do Galho community).

- 1 – Concórdia do Pará town
- 2- Jaurira
- 3- Nova Inácia
- 4- Vila do Galho
- 5- Ipanema
- 6- Conduta
- Family (25 families)

The following figure is an example of a Unit of Family Production from a Pedra Alta family in the Nova Esperança community in Concórdia do Pará *município*. The figure shows the division of land use in a UFP and the production that the family has prioritised. The figure also shows the forms of land occupancy that influence family labour and knowledge production.

Figure 6

An example of a Unit of Family
Production



Source: Field Work, 2005 (this figure was created in the focus group carried out during research in the Vila do Galho community).

(*) This is an example of a Unit of Family Production from the Pedra Alta family in the Nova Esperança community (Concórdia do Pará *município*).

(**) This UFP has 21.25 hectares produced without financial credit and with the system of registry of land occupancy from INCRA. This UFP comprises a mother, father and seven children.

(***) Açaí is a regional fruit.

(****) This example covers an area around of 21.25 hectares. The researcher did not use scale for drawing this figure.

Table 20 demonstrates the social division of labour organised at the UFP and the resources that the family have produced. It shows the dynamics of land occupancy, family labour and knowledge production.

Table 20
Production Process and Social Division of Work

Activities	Months of the Year											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Crops Area												
Cleaning					M							
Clearance					M							
Burning							M					
Cassava cultivation							M					
Corn cultivation	M											
Rice cultivation	M											
Cleaning		FM				FM				FM		
Cassava harvest	FM	FM	FM	FM	FM	FM	FM	FM	FM	FM	FM	FM
Corn harvest				M								
Rice harvest						FM						
Back Yard Cultivation	FM	FM	FM	FM	F	FM	F	F	FM	FM	FM	FM
Land preparation	FM	FM	FM	FM	F	FM	F	FM	FM	FM	FM	FM
Harvest	FM	FM	FM	FM	FM	FM	FM	FM	FM	FM	FM	FM
Permanent Cultivation: Cocoa and <i>açaí</i>	FM											FM
Land preparation			M									FM
Cocoa harvest					FM	FM						
<i>Açaí</i> harvest								FM	FM	FM	FM	
Extraction: Land Cleaning								FM				
Harvesting of natural resources								FM	FM	FM	FM	

Source: Field Work, 2005. Elaborated by the Author

Explanation: (M) Male; (F) Female; (FM) Family

This example identifies the resources that local people have included as important for their livelihoods and the strategies to make them suitable. Local people's knowledge is involved in process that is constantly changing in the context of its production and use (Cornwall et al., 1993: 9). Land is the most basic of natural resources⁹⁹ to local people in the pole of Rio Capim, however, as is pointed out by Saha (2002), local community's resources include other issues such as forests, biodiversity, natural pastures, marine resources and wildlife (2002: 35). It means that the mere presence of the resource locally does not make it natural capital for local communities. As Saha (2002) notes, it is only when local people can gain access and use a resource for a livelihood that they become natural capital (2002: 36).

However, land struggles in areas of the programme actions require rapid solutions for the local people involved, particularly for land titles. The titling process in Brazil is carried out by federal and regional (state) agencies and is grossly behind schedule. It is a slow process that impacts on family production. Land demarcation has been a politically charged issue in Amazonia since the colonization programmes of the 1960s and 1970s (Berardo, 1999: 243). In the area researched, for example, local people have lived and worked for long generations but, predominantly, they have no title documents and thus cannot qualify for the few credit programmes available. The "challenge facing agriculture worldwide involves more than just achieving higher production, justifiable as that goal has been for previous scientific innovation" (Fernandes et al., 2002: 22).

⁹⁹ Natural capital can be defined as the natural resource stocks from which resource and services flow such as nutrient cycling and erosion protection. These are all the resources that are useful for people's livelihoods.

The Unit of Family Production shown in Table 20 is an example of the social distribution of family labour from the *município* of Concórdia do Pará. It identifies the family skills, ability and social organisation for production rather than just an understanding of distribution of economic practice itself. Each person has a specific role in the family unit, for example, the table shows that there are some cases in which the men or woman work alone, but there are other situations where the family works together. Women and children, for example, cultivate domestic animals and medicinal herbs around the house and yard, and they also have an important role during the harvest period. The men work predominantly alone in cleaning, clearance and burning activities.

The FANEP NGO has helped us to build a schedule for production activities and we have done this. It is useful but sometimes we have to change these activities and the period according to some problems that we have such as financial support for specific activities, etc. So, I don't need to plan all activities in only one schedule because it is very complicated.¹⁰⁰

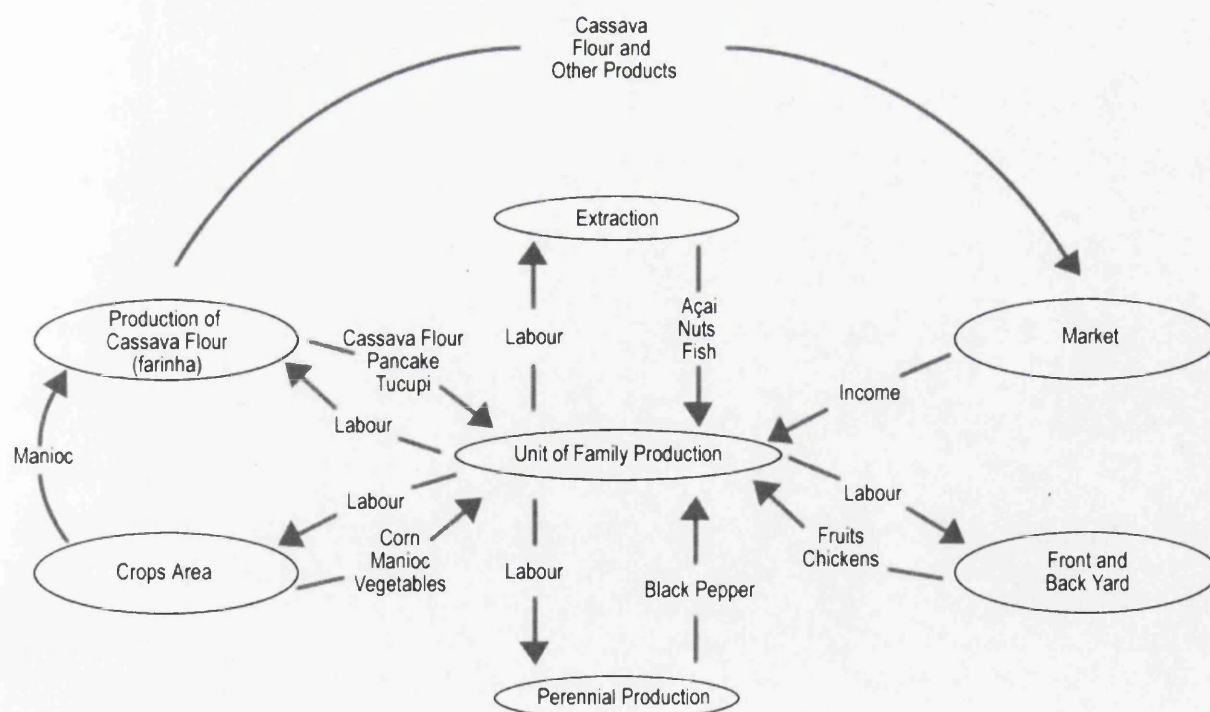
The main goal of workshops promoted by the NGO in Rio Capim was to enable individuals and groups to build the information that they needed in order to achieve their aspirations, to solve at least some of their problems and to increase local people's accountability of the whole development process. Local people in communities from Rio Capim have been oriented to build information about their social and economic resources and livelihoods. The information produced cannot be seen as an end in itself, it needs to be oriented to improve programme implementations. This is particularly pertinent if the government wishes to spread actions to another area and to increase the accountability of local governance. Although the *ProAmbiente* is in an advanced phase of programme action in Rio

¹⁰⁰ Interview with a member of the community from the *município* of Concórdia do Pará, September 2005.

Capim, there are issues with the third programme action (implementation of a new pole) that needs more attention before proceeding to programme implementation.

The figure 7 shows an example of a model cycle of a Unit of Family Production from the *município* of Concórdia do Pará. This dynamic of a model of family agriculture demonstrates the skills and knowledge accumulated over the generations of collective family labourers. Additionally, it means that they have a solid knowledge of economics and the environment based on family agriculture and resource management.

Figure 7
Model Cycle of a Unit of Family Production



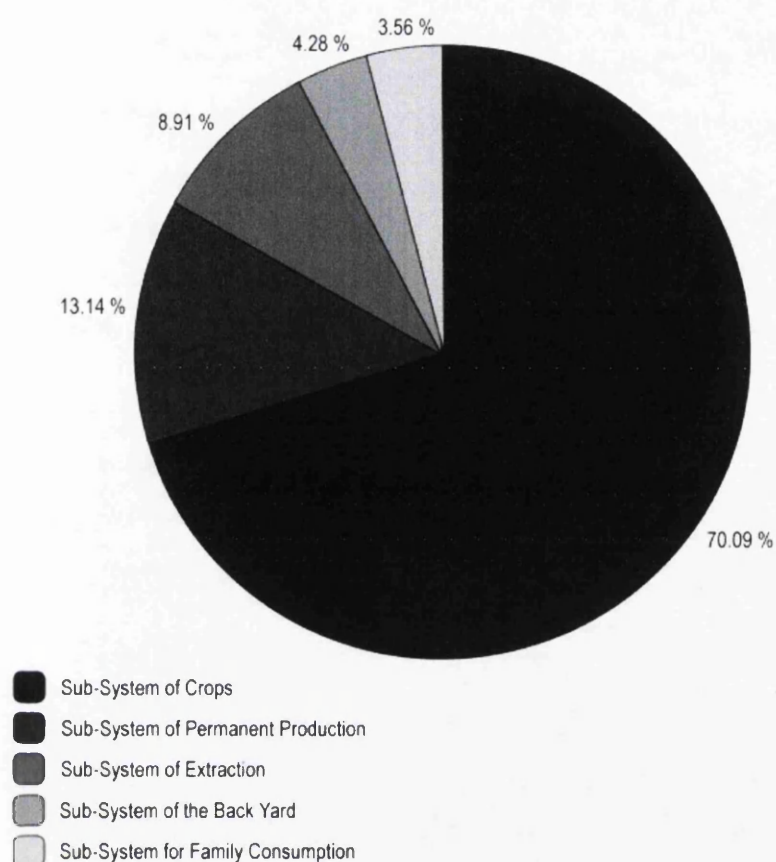
Source: Field Work, 2005. Elaborated by the Author

This unit of family production from areas of Rio Capim presents a variety of relations and a diversity of species of production. Each place has a meaning and is the result of social construction and family reproduction. The example of Figure 7 shows the predominance of the cycle of production supported on *roça* (rice, corn and manioc crops) as part of the local knowledge and cultural identity that is constructed socially. The diversity of species from the back yard (*quintal*) provides fruit throughout the year for the family to consume and take to the market. In spite of the predominance of the production for everyday family life, there is also produce destined for the market. There some differences between areas of production.

There are a variety of models of the UFP in the pole of Rio Capim. These UFP are part of the basic structure, and demonstrate production organisation and the life style of rural areas that is dissimilar from large farmers and large entrepreneurs based on *latifúndios* (Costa, 2000: 65). The critical feature of the UFP is the family and this is the model on which is based the UFP's scope and capacity. The example above presents five sub-systems of production. These are: (1) sub-system of crops production; (2) sub-system of permanent cultivation; (3) sub-system of extractive activities; (4) sub-system of the back yard; (5) sub-system of the family's own consumption. The example shown in the chart below (figure 8) demonstrates the importance of each sub-system to the family income.

Figure 8

Sub-Systems in the Unit of Family Production



Source: Field Work in the Vila do Galho Community, Concórdia do Pará, 2005.

Each sub-system is important to the family however, the sub-system of crops production (rice, corn and manioc) is the most important to the family income, at 70.09% of the total income. This sub-system is carried out from itinerant forms of land use, a practice that is inherited from generation to generation. The cycles of slashing, burning and cleaning are part of the production system. After the harvest period at the end of the cycle, the area is left fallow (*repouso*) for a new production cycle. This implies that a UFP is used both to produce for market and to produce for family consumption. This production for consumption is core to the family.

Some products present different roles among the UFP distributed from four *municípios*. However, manioc production is the main produce in areas of long occupancy, where the soil is more exploited and low in fertility (Mourão, 2000: 134).¹⁰¹ The high interest in the production of manioc flour is the result of a family's cultivation of cassava. Local people merely require a simple location called a *casa de farinha* (mill) to produce manioc throughout the year. The basic family meal consists of boiled fish or dried beef served over manioc flour and *açaí*.¹⁰²

Support from financial agencies is significant in order to increase the area's cultivation and production. The problem is that the agencies have fixed criteria towards the type of product to be cultivated.

Agricultural credit is very important to us but there is a problem. The credit agencies have to evaluate the land resources before being able to give financial support. But they still did not consider certain fruits that are our main income as resources. They say that some kinds of fruit are part of the forest, for which we cannot request financial support.¹⁰³ But we cannot understand why. We have managed our environment to cultivate such fruit because it is a major source of our income. These fruit are part of the yard. We collect and sell it at the local market and with the money we can buy other things that are necessary for our life. I think that to only create a specific credit support for us small agriculturists is not enough; it is necessary to include other criteria to meet our needs.¹⁰⁴

The Brazilian Constitution of 1988 determines that 3% of Industrial Production Tax (IPI) and 3% of the Commercial and Service Tax (ICMS) go to the Constitutional Fund (CF). This fund is used to support projects in less developed regions of Brazil, of which 0.6% is given to Amazonia, 1.8% to the north-east and 0.6% to centre-west regions (Tura 2000b, 274). In the north, this fund was re-named FNO – Constitutional Fund for the North Region.

¹⁰¹ See other authors such as Costa (2000), Tura (2000b) about the importance of credit to peasants in the north of Brazil and the barriers to the peasants.

¹⁰² Regional fruit that is greatly consumed by local people.

¹⁰³ Interview with a member of the community from the *município* of Concórdia do Pará, September 2005.

¹⁰⁴ Interview with member of the community from the *município* of Mãe do Rio, September 2005.

Access to credit in the Pará through *FNO-Especial* arose from the power relations¹⁰⁵ between rural workers' representatives and the Banco da Amazônia (Tura 2000b: 271). It was a positive result after a long period of conflict. Since the 1970s, governmental policies had a negative impact on family production.

The small rural workers gained the right to access credit. Many factors were involved in this relationship such as power relations, land resources available and the agriculture development agencies. The credit access implies some advantages for local people from the 1990s onwards. Apart from access to credit for small rural worker, there arose crucial recognition of citizen's rights for the people that were excluded from public policies for rural areas in Amazonia (Tura, 2000b: 272).

Although the credit policy was reformulated to aid the smaller agriculturists/ farmers, it needs a new assessment policy to focus on local level priorities. Yet, the credit policy requires an adequate amount of action to reformulate its criteria to suit small rural workers and farmers in Amazonia. There is a need for a learning process to incorporate local people's needs into the financial credit required for UFPs. For example, local people in the pole of Rio Capim say that the incorporation of the credit policy is useful for UFPs, however, some problems appear concerning the effectiveness of this policy.

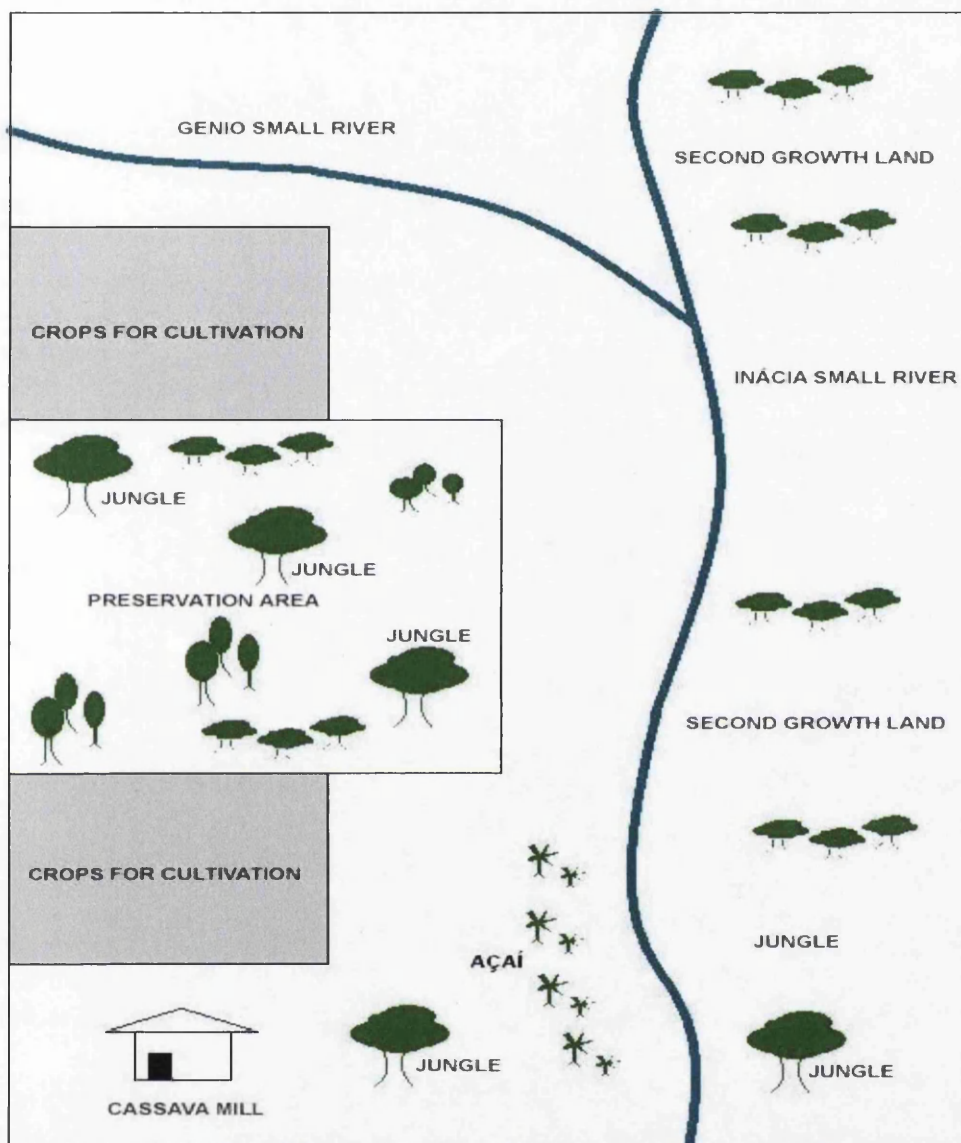
The Rural Workers' Union helped me organise all documents to apply for financial credit. The Bank of Brazil sent a man to evaluate my land. In the end they told me that I could not receive financial support because my land does not meet their criteria. It was a big shock to me because I had organised many things to increase the production and to incorporate other products. My plan was to increase production for entry onto the market.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁵ See Tura (2000a: 29) for analysis of the strong pressure from rural workers and sectors of the civil society in the 1990s that give support to the legitimacy of family agriculture in Pará.

¹⁰⁶ Focus group of agriculturists in the pole of Rio Capim, September 2005.

Sustainable decision making and providing effective solutions involves a political process (Thomas *et al.*, 2005: 217). However, for a solution to be sustainable, negotiations must be inclusive so that small agriculture businesses have greater involvement in decision making. Although some credits have been created to support family production, contradictions emerge because the policies were not adequately applied at local levels. This shows an ignorance of how different rural communities and social groups pursue their interests (Bowyer, 2003: 41).

Figure 9
Unit of Family Production Plan - Concórdia do Pará



Source: Field Work, 2005 (this figure was created in the focus group carried out during research in the Vila do Galho community).

(*) *Açaí* is a regional fruit.

(**) This example covers an area around of 23.40 hectares. The researcher did not use scale for drawing this figure.

Figure 9 represents the distribution of land for production based on a family unit. It shows the location of the family home near the back yard, which facilitates the women and children's mix of duties from housework to production activities. It shows people's knowledge in managing units of family production and their relationship with a livelihood that has been produced and reproduced over generations.

This figure made by local people locates the geographical resources and groups that *ProAmbiente* plan wants in order to spatially distribute a UFP in the pole of Rio Capim. Although the existence of zoning is a concern for local people, one of greatest problems in this plan is how to identify the diversity of resources within the collective areas of production. These areas are blank on the figures.

These figures show that we know our territory. The contribution of the NGO is very important to plan the economic activities. But I don't know if it will be put into practice. One of the problems is that some agriculturists that adhered to the programme have complained about the insecurity of the land occupation. It is because some of them live in areas of land struggles.¹⁰⁷

The complex task is also to identify what impact mapping the local people's knowledge and cultural practices is having. The focus on the social space for change has made visible the ways in which individuals, households and family groups try to integrate planned interventions into existing strategies or generate their own paths for social change.

An important question in assessing resources is what is considered a resource, such as areas of forest, lands or other resources? This is one of the concerns to be considered in the zoning debate in Brazil, such as the Ecologic-Economic Zoning (ZEE) maps produced by the Brazilian Institute for Geography and Statistics (IBGE)

¹⁰⁷ Interview with members of the communities from the *município* of Mãe do Rio.

and Economic and Ecologic Zoning (ZEE) maps produced by the national and regional government. Governmental development agencies in Amazonia have classified the natural resources in zones; however, little attention has been given to local people's own knowledge about social and cultural practices of production.

However, the participation of local people is important to define resources and to decide what is appropriate and a priority for them. Table 21 demonstrates the resources of a Unit of Family Production and the number of their resources of production. It demonstrates the existence of different activities carried out by family groups that form their system of production, particularly production outcomes and their relation to personal consumption and markets.

Table 21

Unit of Family Production - UFP

Production System	Products	Production Total	Consumption	Market
Crops (4.5 ta)	Manioc (4.5 ta)	36 sc	12 %	88 %
	Corn (4.5 ta)	2.25 sc	100 %	-
	Rice (2.0 ta)	2 sc	100 %	-
Permanent cultivation	Cocoa and <i>açaí</i>	-	-	(Others))
Extraction activities	<i>Açaí</i>	2 sc	100 %	-
Back yard production (Quintal)	Chickens, ducks and others	40 units	100 %	-

Source: FANEP, 2005

sc: bag of 30 kg.

ta: area of 2,500m²

Even though agriculture is an important economic activity of the north-east of Pará, activities such as the extraction of forestry resources and the cultivation of fruit and

herbs are also recurrent in the area. This reveals the communities' division of production. The production of crops, extraction activities and back yard production represent local people's ability and skills from generations back (Tura, 2000a: 32). This indicates that these activities are a significant element of their knowledge and cultural identity. Family production constructs lives based on the relationship between livelihoods and needs. The example of one of the Units of Family Production shown in Table 21 emphasises that family production is organised according to the potential of livelihoods and its linkage with socio-cultural local knowledge.

I have worked together with my family all my life. I worked with my father and he worked with his father too and so on. As you can observe, what I know about the agricultural production was the result of knowledge that has been transmitted through my family for long generations. I am worried about my children because they only want to study and I've already told them that they must work to guarantee the food for our family even if they want study at the same time. Our production is small. The majority of our produce is for our own consumption (*subsistência*). But I want to produce more because I want to sell a part to buy other things such as clothes, and products that I cannot produce here.¹⁰⁸

Local knowledge is produced according to local needs and livelihood resources. The identification of needs and priorities are key elements to recognizing what is valuable for local people and it is important for the development of their livelihood. It mixes people's culture, knowledge and identity.

Knowledge gained from the experience of small agriculturists/farmers and women's groups in Rio Capim provide major understanding of units of family production - UFP. The example of one UFP from the Nova Esperança community in the *município* of Concórdia do Pará illustrates the social and economic practices connected with family production.

¹⁰⁸ Interview with a member of the community from *município* of Concórdia do Pará.

I have increased the fruit production in my land but I cultivate other crops at the same time. It is only an experiment but I have to find a market to sell it. I have to take care because I know a family that had invested only in passion fruit and suddenly they lost everything because the juice factory collapsed. And they didn't have another option to sell the produce.¹⁰⁹

However, local people are also open to the development of new practices since changes are connected with their usual practices. For example, the group of agriculturists of the pole in Rio Capim intends to increase the production of fruit such as bananas and pineapples to focus on production of dried fruit. This kind of activity has taken place in some UFPs as a result of the use of new technology and the local people's knowledge of fruit cultivation. Among the agriculturists/farmers from four municipalities interviewed, the agriculturists from Concórdia do Pará were recommended to cultivate various types of mixed species such as fruit associated with manioc, corn and rice to prevent eventual risk of plantation diseases and to avoid losing production in the case of factory collapse. In spite of all the risks that the agriculturists pointed out, they were also suggested to focus on UFP consumption as the main priority for the families.

Creating Interaction at Local Level

The actions of the Brazilian government focus on poverty reduction as a core issue (see the President's speech 2003)¹¹⁰. In the light of commonalities and diversities in the discourses of poverty, it is important to analyse the particular discourses prevailing nationally and locally in a society in order to understand the political space for articulating the interests, needs and concerns of different marginalized groups (Webster and Engberg-Pedersen, 2002: 9).

¹⁰⁹ Focus group with member of the community from the *município* of São Domingos do Capim, September 2005.

¹¹⁰ www.brazilembtt.org/speech-portuguese.htm. Accessed on 08/12/2006.

The example of the *ProAmbiente* as a policy to focus on at local level has shown that the relationship between local peoples and government agencies has a positive impact on improving local community livelihoods. As Toner and Franks (2006) demonstrate, the failure of 'blueprint' development intervention has been well recognised over the last twenty years as a way to overcome the rigidity and top-down operation of much funded intervention (2006: 81).

In spite of intense lobbying activities at federal level to implement the *ProAmbiente* and to incorporate this programme into governmental plans, the new multi-annual investment plan for 2004-2007 (PPA – *Plano Plurianual*)¹¹¹, is very complex and requires strong interaction among those involved in this programme. The table 22 is an example of the relationship promoted between some organisations at local, regional and national levels. It shows communities' relationships, relationships of local people and organisations and so on. People engaged in the *ProAmbiente* programme in Concórdia do Pará have created a dynamic interaction among social movements (such as CUT, the Catholic Church, unions, etc.) and development agencies.

¹¹¹ See MMA, 2005 and www.cbd.int/doc/fin/fin-br-funds.pt.ppt. Accessed on 07/12/2006.

Table 22
Relationships between Local People and Federal, Regional and Local Institutions –
Concórdia do Pará

Organisations	Sphere of Action	Activities at Local Level	Weakness Issues
Ministry of the Environment	Federal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Investment in projects to execute public policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limited financial resources to support projects
Municipal Secretaries (Education, Health, Transport, Agriculture, Environment and Infrastructure Building)	Municipality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff selection; - Implantation of health unit; - Employment of health; Community Agents; - Building of roads; - Technical assistances; - Collective use of agriculture equipment (<i>Patrulha mecanizada</i>) - Transport; - Sources to organise committees; - Education on environment protection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Insufficient economic infrastructure and technical support
Trade Union Workers	Municipality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Credit support - Retirement, maternity pay - Support for agriculture activities - Legalisation of lands - Intermediary between the <i>ProAmbiente</i> and FANEP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Insufficient economic infrastructure - Limitations on assistance.
EMATER	State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Elaboration of projects for agriculturists - Records of agriculturist jobs for credit access - Technical assistance - Organisation of associations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Insufficient transport and human resources.
Associations	Municipality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organisation for credit access and land settlements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Insufficient infrastructure - Lack of credibility between their members
FANEP NGO	–	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Seminars - Workshops - Support for organisation of land use - Planning the ATES and pole assessments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of own resources
EMBRAPA (governmental Institution)	Federal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction of new technologies to avoid the use of fire. 	
Galho football Club	Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organisation of sport and leisure activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Weak infrastructure

Source: Field Work, September 2005. Elaborated by local people from the pole of Rio Capim during focus group exercises carried out by the author.

The relationship among various organisations is the result of the long-term change among local people and social movements that has strengthened engagement with federal and municipal development agencies. Through encouragement of networks at local level, the NGOs and the Brazilian government created a political space to support marginalized people as social actors. Participation as a social act is a mechanism from a pre-existing set of social relations that is more readily applied in situations that ignore and reinforce the set of social relations (Laderchi, 2001: 13). The process of constructing 'social knowledge' relies on the public and the formal. This leads to difficulties in disentangling the voice of the poor from the influence of existing power structures (Laderchi, 2001; Robb, 2002).

The concept of networks as a form of organisation has gained attention as a useful model for examining the interactions of daily life and thinking about community dynamics. Networks are presented as an effective mode of organising complex, turbulent environments and play an important role in development (Gilchrist, 2004: 29). Local level interaction reveals that the social groups that were involved in a collective goal initially for a self-help reason are now interacting through networks with institutions. As Saha (2002: 35) demonstrates, once a strong base of social capital is created in the local civil society, local institutions may emerge as agencies to execute development projects, sponsored by the state. The development of a community is about strengthening and extending the networks of relationships between individuals, organisations and different sectors of society (Gilchrist, 2004: 29). For example, in the *município* of Concórdia do Pará, the organisations are supportive and well connected¹¹² due to political issues. The local government of Concórdia do Pará from the Green Party (*Partido Verde*) maintains a good

¹¹² See more in Gilchrist, 2004 of the different forms of a well-connected community.

relationship with the national government through the Workers Party - *Partido dos Trabalhadores*. The interaction between federal and local government has had a profound influence on programme implementation in the *município* of Concórdia do Pará. The Workers Party have been a key element in this relationship, especially since 2003 when they came to power and gained political strength.

The FANEP NGO staff members are very supportive of us agriculturists. They have helped us to bring some development agencies to meet the needs of this community such as in education, the use of technology for agriculture production and to create some other alternatives for income generation.¹¹³

However, the intensity of such interaction depends on the currently governing local political party and the levels of democracy exercised by citizens. FANEP for example, oriented local people to debate on the different forms of relationships that they have maintained with other organisations. Table 22 shows the existence of the complex dynamics of interaction among local people and organisations at different levels. It means that local people's knowledge is produced through interactions of people in particular situations (Cornwall et al., 1993: 33). As Gilchrist (2004: 25) argues, knowledge is involved in a social process and the knowledge system embedded in a multiplicity of actors and networks. From this perspective, rural people's knowledge comes from social networks that interact in many domains, creating complex knowledge and conditions of changes. Working to establish and maintain these networks is fundamental to effective community development.

¹¹³ Interview with community member from the *município* of Concórdia do Pará, September 2005.

Section Two: Considering the Diverse Nature of Community Livelihoods

The Diverse Nature of the Community

Local knowledge is an effective way to understand local people within their own frames of reference and according to their own assumptions and priorities (Uphoff, 1992; Bowyer, 2006). The ignorance about the diverse features of the rural communities and their different interests has played a part in the inadequacy of the term community (Bowyer, 2006: 360). Chambers (1997b: 41) demonstrates that rural people have capabilities, which earlier were little expressed and unsuspected by most outsiders such as government departments, NGOs or universities (1997b: 41). To understand how the *ProAmbiente* programme impacts upon community's livelihoods, the analysis is focused on the concept of community as a crucial aspect of the nature of diversity.

Through the focus group exercises used in this study, local people from the pole of Rio Capim were encouraged to debate their livelihood resources. These exercises were used to identify local people's understanding and beliefs about their livelihoods rather than only to describe the outcomes of these interactions. The key element was to recognise local people's values and what they considered obstructions in carrying out their activities in the pole of Rio Capim.

One of the issues focused in the first focus group carried by this researcher was to understand the meaning of community.¹¹⁴ The exercise was taken with a sample of 23 agriculturists/farmers and community leaders of the four *municípios* that make up the pole. Each one participant represented a different UFP.

Focus groups also were conducted with local people to access information about the nature of diversity in community livelihoods. The exercise was to promote different interactions among those involved in the programme and to promote understanding of the significant diversity of the rural people in Amazonia taking part. They are involved in a range of interactions and a number of similarities and differences can be observed within the notion of the community space. The focus on community issues was to shift the myths of community involvement in participatory approaches as a 'natural' social entity characterized by solidarity relations (Clever, 2001: 44).

In spite of the heterogeneous features of the group, the research identified three groups of people to illustrate the complex spaces of community. The examples of communities were randomly selected to represent the different groups involved in Programme actions.¹¹⁵ This reveals a particular social feature of expressions of the identities and practices that are inherent to the diversity of society (Sen, 2004: 12).

¹¹⁴ The researcher carried out focus group discussions with all 23 members of the FANEP workshop. However, this method was used after the FANEP meeting. The sense of community was an important issue to analyse the discourse. Four focus groups were divided with the participation of the four *municípios* that take part in the pole activities. These are: Concórdia, São Domingos, Irituia and Mãe do Rio.

¹¹⁵ Initially, four focus groups were used to debate the sense of community in general. In a second phase, the researcher conducted some interviews individually to explore some obscure points.

The nature of community in the pole of Rio Capim reveals that the term community is part of a highly complex process of identity construction. People's sources of meaning and experience are involved in a contradiction of plurality of individual and collective actors (Castells, 1997: 23).

The term community was looked at from local people's understanding. Giddens (1991) argues that the local is where culture and knowledge are produced and where acts of reproduction of the social structure rule (Giddens, 1991: 32), and resources occur (Thompson, 2005: 27). In combination and over time, repeated patterns of social interaction among individuals constitute stable relationships resulting in the emergence of stable social structures (Pearce, 2000; Castells, 1997). They are the 'rules and resources, or sets of transformation relations, organized as properties of social systems' (Giddens, 1994: 25). It means that social structures play an important role in influencing the behaviour of members of an organization: who interacts with whom; who leads and who follows; what is noticed and what is ignored (Chambers, 1997b; Pearce, 2000).

The complex and diverse nature of communities in Brazilian Amazonia requires the analysis of this term in a specific space of social relations regarding cultural, social and political issues. However, community as an 'elusive concept' changes to fit whatever conditions prevail, whilst Cohen (1982: 40-1) merely considers it to be 'a word rich in symbolism' that acts as a comforter to those who are trying to make change. The features of community are particularly significant to identify the cultural attitudes, values and beliefs from one generation to the next in a specific society. It means that community is a place of change as a result of cultural processes and knowledge production (Dove, 2000; Schonhuth, 2002).

Participants regarding the nature of life in the pole of Rio Capim exemplify community as a space's symbolism, its ability to embody social and cultural values. For example, the term *caboclo* is attributed to local people in rural Amazonia (Harris, 1996) and also is strongly associated with Amerindians (Barroso, 2006: 37).¹¹⁶ Local people have some similarity in terms of their livelihoods and social space. *Caboclo* is broadly applied in Brazil to reduce in importance the persons living in the 'back lands' or for anyone of a low social position. Additionally, the term *caboclo* can refer to people of varied racial composition. For Harris (1996: 14), '*caboclos* are the mixed blood people who inhabit the Amazonia waterways'. In spite of a range of typologies to define local people, it is important to recognise that they have ability to survive and make a living in Amazonia. The term *caboclo* is widely used in Brazilian Amazonia as a category of social classification to refer to Amazonian peasants (Aires, 1992; Harris, 1996; Shanley, 2000). The debate gives an idea about the complexity of use of the term and the negative stereotypes of its colloquial use.

Harris (1996), for example, points out that most scholars who have written on *caboclos* have portrayed them as 'adaptations' to their historical and ecological conditions. In addition, *caboclos* have been characterised negatively, as non-tribal Amazonians, without an ethnic identity (op.cit., 32-3). Harris's arguments refute the contingent nature of their lives, and show the ways in which *caboclos* are affirming a positive self-identity. A crucial change of perspective is needed, then, if aspects such as the 'denial' of and resistance to their alleged marginality are to be fully appreciated.

¹¹⁶ See more in Barroso (2006: 37), who analyses the formation of the Amazonia *caboclo* culture into two different periods: (1) 1500-1850 with the arrival of the Portuguese to Amazonia and the rapid cultural exchange from which the *caboclo* emerged, and (2) 1850-1970 where there was an acculturation and absorption of subcultures into the *caboclo* system.

Aires (1992) also discusses the history of Portuguese occupation and ethnic domination of native Amerindians, which points to the origin of Amazonia's low class rural population. Caboclos are described as a peasant sector of the economy of the region, and their economy is regarded as two productive spheres, distinguished by different relations of production: production for direct use and commodity production (Aires, 1992; Barroso, 2006).

Thus, the meaning of community in the pole of Rio Capim demonstrates that they hold a rich biodiversity based on natural, social and cultural resources. Understandings and experiences of community space were further commented on among the focus group participants.

In the first example that follows, the meaning of community demonstrates a strong sense of belonging, particularly in the sense of belonging to a family group and neighbourhood. At the same time, local people are interconnected by individual and/or collective practices that result in a range of social and cultural practices of self-help. *Mutirão*¹¹⁷ is one of the most important collective practices of self-help and of cultural identity in Amazonian communities. Taking account of the principle of *mutirao*, members of a family share problems with other people that they are connected to by family ties. The term community is used to overcome individual family problems and is a method to provide help between families in the community especially for plantation, harvesting, house building and other forms of work.

The family groups are connected to create an economic capacity to promote income and well being for all members. It means that we live in a large family working together in a self-help way, mainly in the heaviest period. We help each other through the use of *mutirão*.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁷ *Mutirão* is a form of collective work where people help each other at plantation and harvest time.

¹¹⁸ Focus group with members of Vila do Galho in Concórdia do Pará, September 2005.

I think that family is the most important thing (...) my parents always said that we should help each other for family purposes (...) we work together, we cultivate, we harvest, we pray (...) ¹¹⁹

The second example of community was encountered in communities of former slave backgrounds. In spite of the close features of this community, members of the community argue that engagement with the *ProAmbiente* programme has resulted in some changes in people's behaviours such as network formation, incorporation of new production activities, etc. The community of Cabo Verde in a *Quilombo* area is one such example. This community originated from the fight against slavery and the struggle for recognition of their rights in chapter 68 of the Brazilian Constitution. According to Almeida (1990), *Quilombos* [lands of black people] are those lands that were donated or acquired by former slave families, with or without legal documents (1990: 229).

Communities are groups of people that are living in the same area with the same problems. People help each other in solidarity mainly when people are sick and they have no money to buy medicine. In this case, we call the *curandeiro* ¹²⁰ to make a medicine from herbs that can be collected in our *quintais* (yards). ¹²¹

In the third example, the sense of community involves an interrelation among various issues such as religion, political and economic interests. Although this example of community presents a strong sense of belonging to a family group, they are the result of mixed kinship relations. While religion constitutes a basis for the constitution of community identity, religious practice does not constitute a basis for the formation of a symbolic identity at the level of the *caboclo* social category at large (Aires, 1992: 57-9).

¹¹⁹ Interview with a 15-year-old-girl, Vila do Galho, September.

¹²⁰ *Curandeiro* is a person that is used in cases of illness and disease. The *curandeiro* uses different types of medicinal herbs from the Amazonia forest.

¹²¹ Focus group with members of the community of Vila do Galho in Concórdia do Pará, September 2005.

Community is a group of families that live in a collective way and is linked by religion to solve common problems. Community is a different group of people that mixed for long generations and nowadays is linked by family relationships that are reinforced by religion and kinship.¹²²

Everything started when the priest from the Catholic Church came along (...) he was a very kind person (...) he showed us that that was important to work together in a collective way, even we belong to a different community [family community] (...) the most important thing is to work for Jesus (...) if we help each other we work for Jesus (...)¹²³

These communities owe their origin to four centuries of miscegenation among peoples of African (slaves), indigenous and white backgrounds. This type of community predominates in most of the areas of the north-east of Pará, where people have different backgrounds but have lived together for long generations. The community of Vila do Galho, for example, has a diverse socio-cultural background from slaves, indigenous and white people that has been mixed and strengthened by inter-marriage. In spite of different backgrounds, they formed a sense of community under religious and political influence.

Here [Vila do Galho] people live together for long generations and they have interests that strengthen the group's family relations. For a long time we know that our families marry only between ourselves (...), but I do not want to marry any boy from our family because my children might be born with a disability. My uncle, for example, got married to my niece and their son was born without a hand. My other uncle got married to another aunt and the doctor said that probably their baby would not walk. At the present, we are more outward looking, because we have more contact with people from other communities. In my case, I want to marry a man from another community.¹²⁴

In contrast to the previous example, the fourth example expresses a sense of community based on place where people are together as a result of the recent occupation. The nature of community is the result of a constant struggle for land in Brazilian Amazonia. The community is composed of people from different places from both inside and outside Amazonia (see Table 23 in this chapter). This community is formed by different groups of people who come from different places in Pará State and from the north-east of Brazil.

¹²² Definition from community members of Vila do Galho in the *município* of Concórdia do Pará.

¹²³ Interview with a community leader, Vila do Galho, October 2005

¹²⁴ Interview with a 15-year-old girl, Vila do Galho, September 2005.

Here there is a community because we are living together with a common objective that is to improve our life and build up our families and friends. We came to this piece of land to rebuild our life (...) we wanted land to cultivate crops and to sustain our families (...) here we are.¹²⁵

(...) we need to link our communities together to have the power to face government impositions (...) [is] the only way to confront the government to solve our land issues (...) we came from different parts of the north-east [of Brazil] looking for a better life (...) in the beginning we did not know each other but we were aware that we had the same problems (...) when FASE [NGO] came along and organised our thinking we were able to organise our association (...)¹²⁶

The sense of community from these areas of occupancy is more complex because people have an insecure life from land pressures. Since human beings also depend on social and cultural systems, socio-cultural risks exist (Koenig, 2006: 108). For example, interviews were conducted with people from the community of Jauira to ask questions about their awareness of the risks in living in this type of community. One of the community members confidently said that despite all of the conflict that they faced during the land occupation, at the present they feel more confident with the support from local and national government.

In the beginning [when the land was occupied] we had problems to restart our life (...) it is hard to restart in a piece of land that is unknown to us, for the members of our family. But nowadays we have land and infrastructure services such as water, electricity, health and schools.¹²⁷

They have improved their livelihood resources with the support of the Landless Movement and the Church Land Commission - CPT. They have also have support from other organisations linked with agriculture sector such as the Rural Workers' Unions, FETAGRI, grassroots associations and others. Although often idealized, the local community has long been regarded as a vital resource for development efforts. Community development is based on the idea that local people, supported by

¹²⁵ Focus group with members of the *município* of Mãe do Rio, September 2005.

¹²⁶ Focus group with members of the *município* of Mãe do Rio, September 2005.

¹²⁷ Interview with member of the community of Jauira, September 2005.

external resources, can implement programmes that significantly reduce the extent of poverty and social deprivation (Hall and Midgley, 2004: 73).

This social configuration came about from the politically-based community. Since the beginning of the 1980s, organisations linked with the Catholic Church (e.g. CPT) and CONTAG¹²⁸ acted in Amazonia in support of peasants and rural workers claiming their human and social rights (Barp and Barp, 2002: 263). The Catholic Church provided the space and support for poor, rural people to come together, both to support resistance to the federal, political model of Amazonia's development and to carry out small projects to improve their living situation (Peixoto, 1995: 80).

The Church followed the theory of liberation¹²⁹ and created a new meaning of community that is directly linked to political positioning in favour of citizens' rights. The Church movement was a reaction to the regional modernization enforced by the government based on a model of capital accumulation. Although new technologies were provided for agricultural use, this model of 'modernization' of agriculture from the 1980s onwards, gave support to large landholders and/or the business sector and marginalized traditional peasants and rural workers. As a result, land concentration and a struggle for land emerged. In spite of the support from the Church and left-wing parties in the Amazonia rural area, violent land conflicts between large landholders and peasants occurred and are still present in the region.

¹²⁸ *The Confederação Nacional dos Trabalhadores na Agricultura* (National Federation of Agriculture Workers) provided great support to counteract the violence of the landowners against the rural workers in Amazonia.

¹²⁹ This theory of liberation comes from Paulo Freire.

As Peixoto (1995: 89) points out, the Catholic Church played an important role in the construction of a cultural identity based on a mix between political and religious issues. From a political-religious perspective, the communities based on settlements have (re)created a cultural identity and accumulated knowledge that makes their sense of community different from previous representations. The struggle for land and also the social costs of the large public projects led to the emergence of peasants' unions and NGOs related to their cause (Hall, 1991; 2004).

The factors that form the meaning of community demonstrate the complex, diverse and dynamic nature of community livelihood in Brazilian Amazonia. It shows that the community is not a matter of institutionalised social arrangements; on the contrary it is expression of modalities of belongings. In local people's accounts of community, what is stressed is the fluid nature of community as an expression of modalities of belonging (Delanty, 2003: 26). The meanings that people have about themselves reveal the diversity of cultural identity that is constructed and reconstructed as a knowledge accumulation process (Barroso, 2006: 100). For example, local people in Vila do Galho, have a diversity of occupations such as a crops cultivators, horticulturalists, fruit collectors, Brazil nuts collectors, fishermen and so on. They often earn a living from several of these activities simultaneously thus demonstrating the high level of diverse livelihoods in Amazonia.

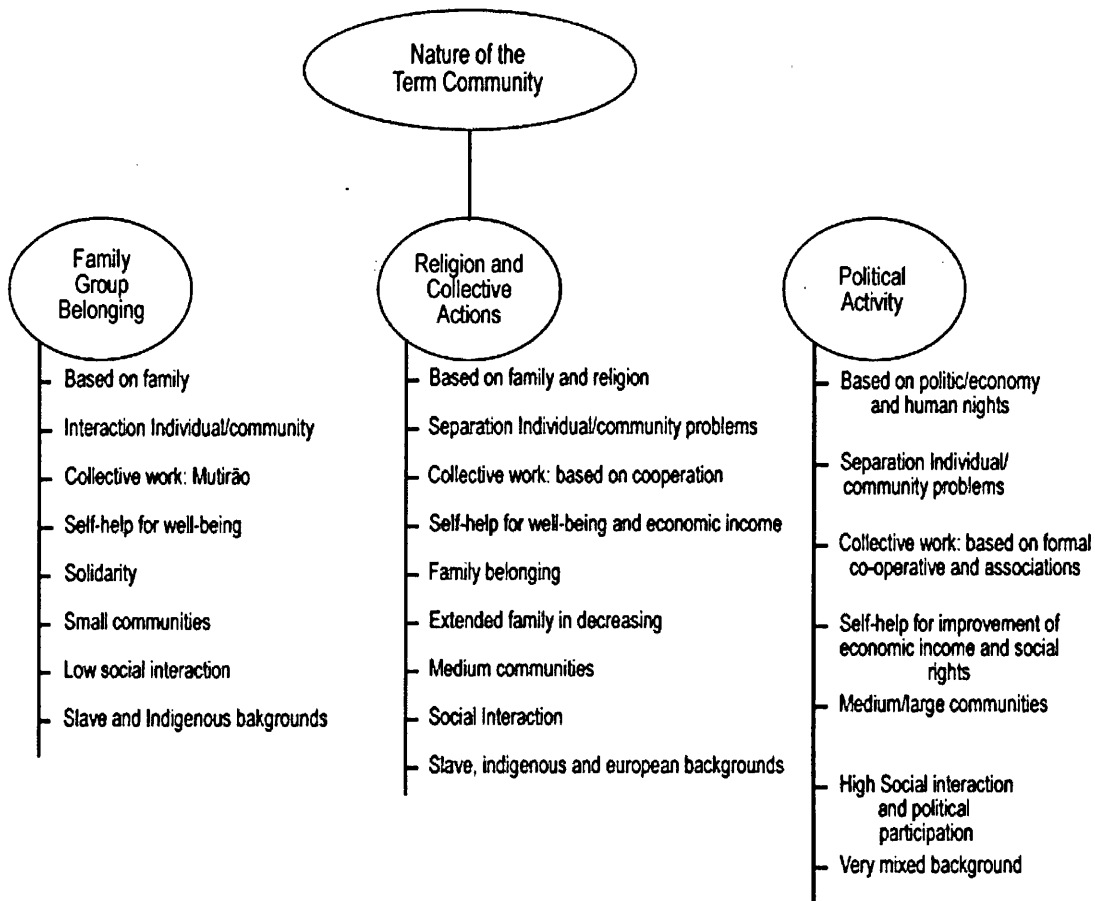
However, the meaning of community is not rigid but fluid and open to change. The configuration of the communities in the pole of Rio Capim points to the fact that local people's livelihoods are involved in diverse socio-cultural practices (see figure 8). It demonstrates that people develop livelihood strategies according to the knowledge and skills based on experiences developed for long generations.

However, the most important issue is to identify how the *ProAmbiente* programme impacts local people's knowledge and the cultural identity that comes from their relationship with their livelihood.

The establishment of communities created an agricultural society connected by roads to other colonies and development poles. The peoples that arrived in the roadside colonies are chiefly from outside Amazonia and thus they are carriers of other regional cultures with adaptive systems different from the traditional Amazonian *caboclos*. Food habits, socialisation methods, worldviews, technical experience and economic expertise all differ.

Figure 10

The Meanings of Community



Source: Field Work, Vila do Galho Community, Concórdia do Pará, 2005. Figure created by the author from local people information.

The understanding of community knowledge as a result of cultural, social and political construction provides insights for discussing the impact of programmes on community livelihoods. Knowledge is involved in a social process that is not simply articulated in direct and immediate relations between people and environment but is also historically constructed through all sorts of social practices (Kothari, 2001: 41).

Livelihood Resources in the Community

Diverse livelihood resources are predominant in areas where the sense of community is strongly based on hereditary of land occupation (mainly in areas of the north-east of Pará where the pole of Rio Capim is located). The hereditary system is very dynamic and an old practice since it had evolved from diverse factors such as cultural interactions, socio-economic change and political processes. In Amazonia, land use and occupation is typically based on long-established local practices and norms. However, the hereditary system of land occupancy in Amazonia has been affected by the state since the 1970s. In order to occupy 'inhabited land', protect frontier areas and to integrate economically Amazonia with other regions of the country, the federal government implemented a policy of *assentamento*. However, from the 1980s to the 2000s, the forms of and reasons for federal government actions in the Amazonia territory have changed. Some examples of the forms of federal government actions in the region include the implementation of large-scale, farming agricultural projects, mineral and industrial programmes, construction of hydroelectric dams and more recently the creation of environmental reserves. These actions in conjunction with other land problems in the entire country have affected people's movement in the rural areas of Amazonia.

The state policy of land occupation is based on a set of laws and decrees. In fact, the current state policy of land occupation derives from citizenship and constitutional rights established by the 1988 Constitution. Land rights in Amazonia are allocated through a policy of *assentamento* (human settlement) and consequently to people through the distribution of titles, acts and/or other forms of registration of ownership (Gaventa, 2006: 31). However, the character of ownership has changed. Many of the

older occupants from the 1970s are nowadays the effective landowners of their lands. The policy of *assentamento*, on the contrary, is part of 'land legalisation' that has increased the regional population from the 1970s onward. According to official statistics, in Pará, 17.48% of the population is composed of immigrants (IBGE, 1996).

Migration patterns are an indicator of the spatial expression of economic and social variations in regions such as Amazonia. Shifts in the patterns of migration over time reveals how such variations has changed, and how people interpret these and react to them in relation to their own, dynamic livelihood priorities. In Concórdia do Pará, for example, the shifts in intra-rural migration patterns within the recent *município* itself are evidence of the dynamics of the population. Table 23 shows the migration patterns in region. IBGE (2000) statistic shows that in the mid-1970s and 1980s the largest *net* inflow was from the north-east region. This underlies the fact that the north-east region was very attractive area in terms of land for rural production.

The official statistics indicate that 'landowner' is the predominant form of land occupation in Concórdia do Pará. The term landowner is ambiguous since it mixes 'traditional landowner' without a property title with 'new-landowner' (those who have official and legal rights for land use). However, between 1986 and 1996, new immigrants via the Landless Movement, the movement that now requests legal rights for land use, had occupied 312 hectares of land (IBGE, 1996).

Immigration has had a great effect on land occupation and use. It impacts on local practices and norms. The sense of community based on family background changes and new values are incorporated. It alters the hierarchal system of family-based

command. In Concórdia do Pará, particularly in rural villages, the dynamics of relationships between people and communities have been affected by immigration and by the federal policy of *assentamento* and other forms of land occupancy.

Table 23
Patterns of Migration in Concórdia do Pará – 1996

Place of Birth	Concórdia do Pará	
	Population	%
Elsewhere in Pará	1,242	79.82
Other States in the North	10	0.64
North-east	288	18.51
South	8	0.51
South-east	4	0.26
Centre-west	2	0.13
Other Country	1	0.06
Not Reported	1	0.06
TOTAL	1,556	100.0

Source: IBGE, 1996

Local cultural identity has been interacting with other identities, thereby generating new characteristics. The table 23 shows the different influences that Concórdia do Pará has received as a result of the migration flux and internal social dynamics. Although the *município* of Concórdia of Pará was created recently, there is a dynamic occupancy of its territory space around Vila do Galho. Immigrants account for 8.42% of the population of this município (IBGE, 1996).

Local people from backgrounds of long generations are now interacting more with individuals from the rural and urban area of Pará State. The area most affected by occupancy is the area located around Vila do Galho that is facing a rapid movement of occupancy. The complexity of land occupancy in Concórdia has to be considered by the Programme since the diversity of local people communities is growing significantly.

Local People's Concerns about their Cultural and Social Resources

A major limitation of most development agencies is the notion that the institutions should provide at village level the technology, information, and knowledge seen as effective strategies of reducing development gaps. The challenge is how to incorporate issues of culture and knowledge into a policy of community development that can be applied in different settings.

The sets of inflexible policies actions addressed to community development have to be re-examined to shift the idea of community as a homogeneous entity. Otherwise, the image of communities as harmonious units and whose members share common interests and priorities will be reinforced. Furthermore, the recognition of diversity on the basis of a cultural attribute (Castells, 1997: 38) must be part of a construction of the meaning of community. Participatory development's tyrannical potential is systemic, and not merely a matter of how the practitioner operates or the specificities of the techniques and tools employed (Cooke and Kothari, 2001: 4).

Although a number of issues were debated with the beneficiaries of the pole of Rio Capim in the workshop promoted by NGOs, the researcher felt that some issues could be further explored, to add into discussions aspects of various groups' priorities (agriculturists both male and female, community leaders, younger girls and boys and older people). It means that rather than being interested in actively taking part in decision making, people want to have strong leaders that 'know how to rule' and that are able to make decisions on their behalf (Mutebi, 2004: 289). Despite the importance of creating the leaders in the local communities, there are some problems with the idea that leaders can make decisions in the name of local people. As was

argued by Melluci (1996: 50), local people create informal networks to avoid central control mechanisms, and are seen as content to operate with high levels of autonomy, and low formal accountability.

Although the unit of family production is an important issue to analyse cultural, social and economic resources produced for generations, different characteristics emerge as result of cultural identity and knowledge production. Local people's interests are also linked to the type of knowledge and skill that people have and that has been produced for generations. Local people's knowledge and skill is the result of the interaction between forms of natural resource use and the cultural attributes of the different groups that pursue a diversity of identity (Mosse, 2001: 27).

Despite the fact that most local people directly depend on agriculture (IBGE, 2000) they are still engaged in other economic activities that are linked to the exploitation of natural resources and skills gained from their knowledge and experiences. The unit of family production is based on the diversity of the production sub-system (as shown in Figure 7).

Three years into the programme at the pole of Rio Capim, the climate of expectation continues between the community and the NGO staff, and even within the community. The project has failed to base its line of reasoning on premises that are acceptable to the majority of community members, and a tense relationship has led to a number of confrontations in public meetings. The attempt to convince the local, traditionally agrarian population to adapt other activities can be an alternative. However, an orientation on common economic practice has little chance of success. Local people from the pole of Rio Capim have been traditionally involved in family

agriculture practices. This is an area of fertile gallery forests, which are the most suitable areas for growing cash crops. Even in areas of *assentamento*, the alternative offered is problematic because they need to address elementary concerns such as land regularisation and other support to give people the incentive to stay on their lands.

The project carried out by FANEP in Rio Capim proposes the introduction of new economic activities such as beekeeping, fish farming and horticulture. These are considered by FANEP as good alternatives to increase the incomes of local people. However, local people still want to carry out their traditional activities.

Although the *ProAmbiente* is still encouraging agricultural methods that use new production technologies, at present the programme has advocated the inclusion of other projects including honey production and fish farming. Although the project has encouraged the incorporation of other economic activities in this pole, these proposed productive activities are dissociated from the cultural identity of the family. This is an identity based on collective work, self-help and effective participation of women in productive activities.

The NGO has a project to create other economic activities but I do not know exactly what it is because only my husband has taken part in the meetings. It is strange for me because I always take part in the meetings, although I always passed everything onto my husband. Now it is different, he has taken part in the meetings, training, everything and I do not know if it will work without my children and me.¹³⁰

¹³⁰ Interview with a woman from Vila do Galho, September 2005.

The introduction of projects such as honey production and fish farming has been criticised, mainly by women's groups. Despite this, these projects are presented to communities as a method to increase local people's income, and to introduce other projects that are not family-based.

Despite distributing large amounts of information on honey production and the creation of fishery projects, these activities are very new for us. Perhaps I will like these activities but until now I do not know if I will really engage in any of these activities. I have worked with agriculture for a long time and I do not know how to do other things. I will participate in the course and after that I will decide.¹³¹

Although it is expected that members of a community work collectively in honey production and the creation of fisheries, such activities are disengaged from the usual forms of units of family production and community co-operation. Honey production and fishery creation have a market and business orientation and this orientation does not motivate people for collective work in the same way as *mutirão* practices. This shows that even when people act in collaboration such collaboration has different meanings for the people in the community. Moreover, the interests of one group may not be the shared interests of the rest of the community.

The new economic activities were not competitive with the existing alternatives, which the project sought to restrict. The main source of livelihoods in Rio Capim is agriculture, based on the cultivation of maize (corn), bananas, rice and manioc. The last two crops are produced in areas of the old land occupancies such as Vila do Galho. They represent the most important source of income for the majority of households.

¹³¹ Focus group, women's groups in Vila do Galho, September 2005.

The changes may be suitable for the *ProAmbiente* model that stresses significant environment appeal. However, the changes also require other forms of skill and abilities that local people do not share.

(...) The projects for communities are important to increase our income; however we need more skills and the ability to work with them (...). The FANEP will create a cooperative to manage the projects, but we do not know how this works properly. They said that the next stage will be a workshop about the use of technologies; we are waiting for it, but we do not know about this yet (...) ¹³²

Two issues are involved with the learning process. Firstly, the conservation of the environment, the introduction of 'clean' technologies and the creation of new economic practices depend on investments in educational processes. Secondly, in order to achieve this, one must learn how to establish communication, in all settings, with both men and women and children. The researcher asked four women at the NGO workshop why they were attending the meeting. It is usually assumed that they are just replacing their partner, who for some reason could not participate in the meeting.

It is the first time for me to attend the NGO meeting. Although I work equally with my husband in all agriculture phases, in general he takes part in the meetings and the training. Today I am here because my husband is ill. I am attending to listen to what they want to say, and then I will tell my husband. I think that they (*ProAmbiente* and NGO) have something important to tell us (...) that is why I came. As my husband is ill I have to work with my children in all cultivation processes and training without problems. ¹³³

The examples of the families in Vila do Galho identifies that the roles among them are well-defined according local rules constructed socially for long generations. Even where this self-consciousness is cultural rather than formal, it must be taken into account.

¹³² Interview with people of Vila do Galho, 2005.

¹³³ Interview with women from município of Concórdia do Pará.

I attended the course about Clean Technology (see Chapter Three) and the first result was satisfactory because we spent less time cleaning the area of cultivation without burning, and at the end, production increased. I have attended the NGO and the programme meetings and the course that they have promoted because my husband likes practice more than theory. After that I pass on the information to my husband and my children.¹³⁴

Social and economic roles of men and women are dependant on their needs and priorities according to the degree of access to resources and participation in decision making. In both cases, women's participation depends on beliefs and the degree of skills in each setting.

Table 20 in the previous section shows that male and female labour (family units) has the same weight as the factor of production. The level of access to resources and participation in decision making processes is different but it is in balance with family planning. The rural family is structured according to knowledge that is constructed socially and the rules established in family groups. Although local people are engaged in courses, training and other orientations from development agencies they ask to follow the right period for cultivation and harvest (*calendário agrícola*) that resonates with local beliefs.

The period for cultivation and harvest is a concern of young people. As they have worked in production activities they claim a school that deal with the rural reality. Families wish their children to attain good school grades according their social and cultural features. In order for their involvement to be enhanced, it was important to be aware that it was not enough simply to focus on women or on young people as a separate group what was needed in all cases was to pay attention to the different roles of men and women in the development circumstances concerned, and to the various relationships between these roles.

¹³⁴ Interview with women from the community of São Domingos do Capim

Another important aspect is to be considered in the *ProAmbiente* action is to distinguish between the roles in each of the specific groups. Each specific group has its own characteristics and these must be taken into account in any form of interaction. In the same way, each group will be concerned with a given development problem in different ways. For this reason, one cannot approach each group in the same manner. Moreover, each group has its own social codes and ways of doing things. Similarly, their ways of participating in communication will be different and certain conditions will have to be assembled if real communication is to be established with each group. It is important therefore, to take the time to become familiar with each group and to identify the general characteristics that must be taken into account in communication, as well as the factors that may place conditions on their participation in the *ProAmbiente* programme.

Exploring Local Knowledge

Knowledge is decisive for development. However, the production of knowledge involves shaping and adapting the systems to a given context, cultivating local learning processes and institutionalizing routines of use that persist over time. One of the requirements for the sustainability of technological projects in developing countries is that local knowledge is valued, sustained and integrated in the process of implementation of new technologies (Arce, 2003; Stringer and Reed, 2006). The new technologies have to be seized upon and appropriated if they are to serve the goals of social and human development in these countries. Otherwise, the knowledge paradigm will only increase the existing levels of exclusion and inequality (Stringer and Reed, 2006: 12).

A focus on the social space for change made visible the ways individuals, households and groups try to integrate planned interventions into existing strategies or generate their own paths for social change (Arce, 2003: 849). Findings from a focus group with a group of 12 women in Vila do Galho, identified the expectations of different groups from the technical solutions for improvement of their resources.

I cultivate many kinds of vegetables and I have introduced them into our diet, but without much knowledge about the best way to use them [vegetables]. My children did not like them. (...) when the FANEP promoted a course about cooking me and some friends were interested (...) so, we (women's group) attended a mini-course that was called 'kitchen school' (...) and we improved the taste of our food. (...) sometimes I thought "why are people still hungry if we have many kinds of fruits and vegetables on our land?" I did not understand (...) from this course we learnt about many forms of vegetables and fruit use (...) nowadays our children like our vegetables much more (...).¹³⁵

Knowledge is involved in a social process that is not simply articulated in direct and immediate relations between people and environments but is also historically constructed through all sorts of social practices (Kothari, 2001: 140). In Rio Capim, the evidence indicates that FANEP and the network that it created play a significant role to the communities' access to new technologies and in adding to the skills and abilities already existent. There is some evidence of community change in the agricultural sector, notably in establishing markets.

(...) It is important that the Ministry of Environment offer incentives for other things and not only the use of the clean technologies in our system of production (...) they need to expand to other areas and to make links with people from other communities. It is not fair to have only a few courses about the environment; it is not fair to have courses only because we used burning in our production (...).¹³⁶

In communities, including clusters of villages from former slave backgrounds and *assentamentos*, networks affect both social and economic outcomes. It is socio-cultural interactions that capture local knowledge and circulate it within the communities. Local people in rural areas of Amazonia live very far from their

¹³⁵ Focus group with women from the Vila do Galho community, September 2005.

¹³⁶ Focus group with members of Vila do Galho, 2005.

neighbours and are isolated from them. However, the family group create strategies for living in groups, to strengthen their relationships and to improve contact.

A long time ago, we had some meetings with leaders of the social movement and everybody talked about the problems that are in rural areas of the Amazonia (...) we live inside the forest and we were quite isolated from each other (...) I think that this debate was important for us because nowadays we are living together as a village (...) we have our house close to each other (...) and we now have access to electricity, school, water and satellite dish. There is a satellite dish in the teacher's house and if you want to use your telephone just go there and plug in your mobile phone. Usually it takes some time because it does not have a fast connection, but if you are patient (...).¹³⁷

The Brazilian state has created mechanisms to protect those from indigenous and slave backgrounds from being separated (even forcefully) from powerful dominant groups. The Federal Constitution of 1988 promotes the development of a pluralistic society that is free of prejudice (Brasil, 1988). The fundamental objectives stipulate that one of these objectives is to promote the well being of all people without prejudice based on origin (Federal Constitution of 1988, article 3, section IV) (Brasil, 1988). Various ethnic groups such as indigenous peoples, European colonizers, immigrant workers, and Africans brought to Brazil as slaves have blended together to create a multicultural society.

In any example, family groups create their own stories to adapt to livelihoods and/or to change their situation. For example, people from Santa Luzia have lived very closely together, for long generations to protect their cultural identity (former slave backgrounds). Although they have strengthened their identity with support from ethnic movements such as the Black Movement (*Movimento Negro*), they are engaging in the government programme to find solutions to improve their livelihoods.

¹³⁷ Interview with member from Vila do Galho, September 2005.

I have lived here with my family for a long time (...) actually, every generation of my family has lived here (...) we are different, here everybody [Cabo Verde community] is black and we have followed our norms and beliefs. People from other communities call us the “community of the *morenos* (brown)”.¹³⁸

There is only one cassava mill (casa de farinha) for all the community and we have worked together to share everything. We feel that we are culturally and socially different from other communities because we produce only for ourselves, as a large family (...) and we only have support from groups that help black people (...) we want to continue in the same style of life, however with some few changes. That’s why we have engaged with the *ProAmbiente* programme (...) this is to improve our life.¹³⁹

The issue of scientific knowledge relates to the application of pertinent spatial themes such as soil types, vegetation patterns (FANEP, 2006: 15). For example, in the context of addressing the land degradation problem, inputs from the scientific domains of spatial diagramming of various themes, and their modelling were built. This is based on the premise that the adoption of innovation can be facilitated by the proper identification of traditional communication systems through which members of the community acquire and diffuse their existing knowledge, attitudes and practices. The problems is that even when the communities have control of participatory approaches, when this information is translated into macro policy messages and results are aggregated, local people may lose control and results may not be fed back to communities for comment and verification (Robb, 2002: 74-75).

Although western resource management has provided many benefits and enhanced productively, its sustainability has often been questioned because ‘scientists lack awareness of long-term changes within specific ecosystems, with which local knowledge has co-evolved’ (Mosse, 2001: 20). For improved scientific rigour, examinations designed by local people must be considered in parallel with ‘scientific’ experimentation (Bebbington, and Farrington, 1997; Cleveland and

¹³⁸ Interview with women from the community of Cabo Verde in Concórdia do Pará, September 2005.

¹³⁹ Focus group with people from the community of Vila do Galho and Cabo Verde, in Concórdia do Pará, September 2005.

Soleri, 2002). Although participation is adapted to the local environment and people, it is usually without interest in, and respect for, local knowledge.

Mosse (2001: 21) argues that the fact that local knowledge is shaped by both locally dominant groups and project interests that interact at local level. False respect and knowledge of dependency can lead to forced consensus in a rapid PRA – conventionally conducted with ‘experts’ and ‘locals’ together. Issues of power relations are involved too (Chambers, 1997a; Scoones and Thompson, 1993), and this came up many times with households in Rio Capim. When the researcher asked how people tackle certain problems, the field work participants responded that.

The ‘experts’ should tell us what to do with the use of new technology but we know the environment based on the experience and knowledge that has been transmitted for many generations.¹⁴⁰

Rural people are aware of their knowledge of productive activities, however they have learnt that environmental knowledge is the restricted reserve of the ‘experts’. Such received perception obscures a plurality of alternatives and legitimate knowledge about the environment (Mosse, 2001; Mejía, 2004).

Although the villagers accepted the experts’ advice, they made other suggestions for tackling environment issues, and could argue them well about the experience of putting it into practice. Many practices proved to be based on ideas unidentified to the experts present. For example, the agriculturists asked for more support to cultivate regional fruits such as mangos, bananas and pineapples because they are experienced in the drying of the fruits. However, more attention was given to the NGO project that has the team of experts.¹⁴¹

In aspects of health, local people usually request natural plants from the forest far more frequently than industrialised medicines. Although the demand for medical assistance has significantly increased since the creation of the *município* of

¹⁴⁰ Interview with household from Vila do Galho, September 2005.

¹⁴¹ Interview with NGO staff, September 2005.

Concórdia do Pará, it is only used in case of extreme need because the health centre is located 8 kilometres from Vila do Galho.

(...) A few years ago, the [state] Health departments built a surgery in Vila do Galho (...) it is still there, but there are no doctors or nurses. So, it does not work. (...) We asked to build a surgery in Vila do Galho because it is a central place for all communities around. For them [state], it does not matter (...) at the moment, if we feel ill we have to walk [around] 28 kilometres to reach a surgery in the centre of the city.¹⁴²

Natural remedies were being used as the primary source of healing. Firstly, because local people have difficulty in accessing conventional medicine; secondly, local beliefs are strongly based on mystic beliefs (supernatural creatures from the Amazonia forest) and medical specialists such as *pajés*¹⁴³ (individuals with shamanistic powers, inherited from the Amerindian tradition), *benzedeiros* (blessers), and *parteiras* (midwives). For example, there is a health centre (*posto médico*) in Vila do Galho that was built during a political campaign, but it never was used.

The health centre was built, the local government sent medicines, and other things need for health care, but they did not send a doctor. In the beginning we were very excited to begin to use the health care from the city but it never happened. As you can see, now this place is abandoned. We think that is better to use our local health care. Only it is a problem when the illness is very serious. Four months ago, a 12-year-old boy was bitten by a snake and died. His dad was in the centre of the city, 10 kilometres from Vila do Galho. When he arrived here it was night and he tried to take the boy to the hospital, but he couldn't find a car to go there. The next day he found a car but was too late, the boy died. Local people have not asked to use the health centre again because they usually make use of the local *curandeiro* in cases of illness.¹⁴⁴

Local people's beliefs are also associated with the supernatural and its relationship with the environment. Some features of local knowledge and beliefs were identified in conversations during informal meetings after dinner. It is a significant part of the day where people spend time with family and friends to exchange life experiences according to their beliefs. For instance they talk about local legends such as the

¹⁴² Focus group with people from Vila do Galho, September 2005.

¹⁴³ This is an activity carried out by a person who has shamanistic powers inherited from an indigenous tradition.

¹⁴⁴ Young people's focus group from Vila do Galho, September 2005.

curupira (small black animal, humanlike in form, but with its feet pointing backwards, that lures people to the forest to kill them); the *cobra grande* (a boa constrictor that is too large to live on land, forcing it to live in rivers) or the *boto* (freshwater dolphin that transforms itself into human form to seduce men or women in a deadly manner). The local people's beliefs correspond to their environmental concerns. For example, if they live near the river, their belief in the *boto* is high, but if they live near the forest, their belief in the *curupira* is predominant.

As regards education, the researcher asked local people to identify some weak aspects. Although there is a focus on basic education to adopt new technologies in rural areas in Pará State, in the rural areas it is still a matter to be overcome (Tavares, 2002: 32). Many children have to walk great distances daily, only to find a school in poor condition, without furniture, learning materials, drinking water or toilets, and sometimes even without teachers.

In spite of such deprivation, some communities have seen positive results in children's education. For example, in Vila do Galho, the local government has implemented strategies for educational improvements such as transport, teacher qualifications and adult education. This improvement in education policy is seen as answers to local people's organisations. Once a strong base of social capital is created in the local civil society, local institutions may emerge as agencies for the execution of development projects, sponsored by the state (Saha, 2002: 35).

We are lucky to live in this village [Vila do Galho] because it has worked together and identified what we need the most. Our Women's group is strong and we have had many meetings to discuss what we want. In general we have meeting one day per week after the Church services {Catholic Church}. As this village is the centre, there are many other communities around; it enables contact with other women. We have to work a lot to plan social and cultural events such as choirs and the *cirio* events (religious meeting of the Catholic Church to celebrate local saint's anniversary).¹⁴⁵

Debating the education issues with the 15 women in the focus group from Vila do Galho, the adult education programme was deemed the most important for them. There has been a great increase in access to schools in the area. Local government in Concórdia do Pará adopted a series of actions such as employing more teachers, constructing more space at schools for younger people, creating adult education programmes and improving the electricity supply.

I have just started to study in Vila do Galho. I thought that I was very old to start my studies but I have changed my mind. The classes are very interesting and the teachers are very supportive (...) they understand my difficulties. They come from Belém [capital of Pará]. They stay here from Monday to Friday. (...) the classroom is the space where the women from different communities that surround Vila do Galho are together to study and to plan our meetings in the weekend.¹⁴⁶

My children are becoming more interested in attending school because I have supported them to study (...) they also like to go to school with me.¹⁴⁷

Findings from the women's focus group in Rio Capim identified that some improvements could be better if the programme provided other incentives as strategies to develop rural areas in the pole. Some strategies were pointed out such as financial aid for students from poorer families (*bolsa escola*¹⁴⁸ - school grant), incentives for teachers to live in rural areas, more support for adult education and night classes (this is a time period that suits adult learners most).

¹⁴⁵ Interview with a women in Vila do Galho, September 2005.

¹⁴⁶ Interview with women in Vila do Galho, September 2005.

¹⁴⁷ Interview with women in Vila do Galho, September 2005.

¹⁴⁸ *Bolsa escola* is part of the education policy of the Luis Inácio da Silva government (2003-2006).

The creation of more opportunities for young people to attend university was also pointed out as a need.

I am attending the *Interiorização* [Programme of Pará State University in rural areas] in the municipality of São Miguel do Guamá in July. I am taking a mathematics course. This municipality is four hours by bus from Vila do Galho. It is very tiring for me to go there but at the same time it is very important. When I decided to apply for the university exam, my cousin and friends said to me that I was out of my mind. I believed that it could be possible and now it is reality. But I know that it is very difficult and I think that the government could create more opportunities for other young people who think that university access is not possible for us who live in the forest (...) When I finish my course I want to work here in my community because they need more teachers who live here.¹⁴⁹

However, the emphasis on university is not a priority for the majority of young people. The priority is on basic education that is still far from reaching the majority of rural people. Although there is a school in Vila do Galho, there are not enough places available for the children from neighbouring communities and it needs to include relevant topics for rural livelihoods so as to facilitate more supportive school-community links. As Tavares (2002: 38) argues, Amazonian rural families desires for their children to attain good school grades depends on a family's social and cultural features. Access to education may be improved by incorporating knowledge, skills and values into issues relevant to local communities. This would thus reduce the reluctance of families to have children's time 'wasted' on useless learning.

¹⁴⁹ The interview with a 19-year-old woman from Vila do Galho, September 2005.

Conclusion

Programmes that contribute to the agricultural production of small-scale agriculture and are supported by public investments and appropriate rural development policies are more efficient than large-scale agricultural programmes favoured by modernization theorists (Hall and Midgley, 2004: 75). The interaction of the *ProAmbiente* programme in the pole of Rio Capim has been a positive feature. Under FANEP NGO intermediary practices, this programme interacts at many levels to involve local people in the programme. The establishment of the programme is a complex task since it is involved in a range of interactions at local level. Local people's livelihood resources are connected, modelled and mediated by power relations. The recognition that the expression of needs and priorities takes place in a context marked by power relations on the basis of cultural attributes is crucial to making any development programme effective.

Difficulties often arise in analysis of the space of interaction at local level of policy actions and its impact on local people. Through the use of mapping approaches, local people have demonstrated their livelihood resources and debated their skills, abilities and knowledge that have been constructed for long generations. However, the local people's expectations rise proportionally when they are asked to take part in interactive participation.

Local people are concerned that the programme over stresses issues regarding forest conservation, distribution of the productive activities rather than focusing on land reform and land concentration. Another aspect of concern for local people is the characteristics of the programme proposed. For example, the implementation of the

new productive activities such as beekeeping and fish farming are important for income generation but they are not part of the communities' knowledge and culture. Although these activities were incorporated in other communities with positive results, local people want more time and to acquire the skills and abilities to manage it. These considerations are suitable for UFP improvements and the significant issues of the cultural identity of the family.

The cultural features of the local communities have an important role in the policy space, in the diversity of cultural and social practices that are accumulated through a long process of acquisition. Local people are involved in a set of capabilities such as technologies, and local strategies that are matched between diverse actors. It is also concerned with identity, aspirations, structures and practices.

Chapter Eight

Conclusion

Introduction

This chapter stresses the main study's conclusions. The thesis aims to answer to the follow questions: How do demands from the grass-roots scale up to public policy, take account of changes and then scale down to local communities? How does a state-sponsored development programme – using a popular participation approach, carried out by federal government, and intermediated by NGOs – interact with, and impact on local communities? In order to answer this, the thesis has examined the interaction between the federal government in Brazil and Amazonian rural communities in the implementation of the *ProAmbiente*.

Through a methodology that involved three levels of qualitative analysis (macro, intermediary and local levels), the study has reconstituted the socio-political context that influenced the creation of *ProAmbiente*; described the mechanisms of interaction between the federal government and rural communities and pointed out the factors that have facilitated and/or hampered the implementation of the *ProAmbiente*. The study has also revealed some contradictions of *ProAmbiente* implementation and has shown certain impacts of the *ProAmbiente* on the rural communities.

The Socio-Political Context of *ProAmbiente*

Chapter Three has analysed the construction of the *ProAmbiente* and has shown that the programme's trajectory is linked to the long-term relationship between those involved with rural workers and their struggles for land in Amazonia. The key task in strengthening rural social movements in Amazonia was supporting the rural workers and their organisations who were affected by a top-down policy model based on rapid modernisation in the agriculture sector. The agricultural modernization that took place in the region (from the dictatorship government period onward) had a negative effect on the Units of Family Production — pushing them towards migration and poverty.

In the example of Pará State, a strong social network supported the rural workers and their organisations that from 1970s were involved in struggles for land. Through the influence of Paulo Freire's idea of liberation, the organised civil society helped rural workers to develop a consciousness of their real situation. The idea of awareness was important in creating a collective consciousness to work in an organized way to obtain better land and rights as part of citizenship in regional society. In the Transamazônica area, for example, the Rural Workers' Unions' were structured to meet the pressing needs of their constituents. During the 1980s, Brazilian Amazonia faced three significant environmental problems from development patterns implemented by the military government and this continued in the first post-dictatorship civil government. Firstly, there was the rapid growth of wood exploitation and forest clearance in the former colonised areas. Secondly, there was massive jungle clearance using 'slash and burn' methods for the expansion of agriculture and cattle ranching. Thirdly, there was the expansion of settlement areas to cope with intense people migration. At the end of the 1980s, these problems had

grown more serious, particularly in the states of Pará and Rondonia, arousing national and international attention. At that time, there was already scientific evidence that forest burning could accelerate global warming by contributing to the emission of 'greenhouse gases' (mainly carbon dioxide) and Brazil was internationally identified as the largest contributor of emissions of 'greenhouse gases' among tropical countries. The combination of protests and negotiations with the state from 1990–1995 contributed to the greatest achievement of rural workers during this second cycle. This was the creation of a new form of rural credit designed to meet the needs of the poorest peasants in the region called *FNO – Especial*.

Chapter Five has shown that from the experience of *FNO – Especial* and the continuous interaction of the rural workers and their organisations with external actors (such as NGOs, political parties and research institutes) in working for an alternative for the development of social excluded communities, the idea was born for a programme to link social, economic and environment issues. Within this context emerged the *ProAmbiente* proposal. The *ProAmbiente* incorporated the experience of *FNO – Especial* taking into account the need to include local communities' culture and knowledge in programmes for rural communities in Amazonia. The proposal was formulated by the rural social movements and required the participation of local people in every phases of the *ProAmbiente*. The *ProAmbiente* is the only programme from the federal government to incorporate the demands of the rural social movements in Brazilian Amazonia. Central to its structure is its approach to participation that takes into account the local communities' culture and knowledge.

The main conclusion about the socio-political context discussed in Chapter Five is that long-term interaction constructed through the rural social movement, political

parties, and grassroots organisations is a significant factor in building a proposal to support rural workers. This then turns the relationship between the state and civil society into a major mechanism of social accountability at local level. Social networks support local priorities and also influence policies, particularly local development policies such as the *ProAmbiente* in Brazilian Amazonia. This thesis identifies that the emphasis placed on endogenous (internal) rather than exogenous (external) forces of change is central to the development process. Without such emphasis, it is difficult to incorporate local communities' culture and knowledge into a new pattern of development programme to involve social, economic and environment issues.

The Route and the Challenges of the *ProAmbiente* Programme

Chapter Five concentrated on the strategies of the *ProAmbiente* to change from macro-level policy to community-level action to focus on local people's livelihoods. Chapter Five has identified that the left-wing government that came to power in 2003 influenced the incorporation of this programme into policy. With a left-wing party in government, some of the actors that supported the rural workers on the *ProAmbiente* proposal gained the power to incorporate the *ProAmbiente* as a governmental programme. This was a change in direction from a grassroots project to a governmental programme. At present (2008), the programme is transitioning to public policy. As a governmental programme, the *ProAmbiente* faces some challenges to carry out its actions in areas of the constant conflict for land in Pará State (such as the poles of Transamazônica and Marajó).

In spite of efforts to transform the programme into public policy, the evidences of this work show that it needs more interaction between governmental departments. Every government department in Brazil is structured to work in a specific way. They act in as disconnected instruments of government making it difficult to meet the needs of the complex model of diverse issues that is the *ProAmbiente*. As the programme came from the grassroots organisations and rural workers, the proposal comprises various issues that involved land struggles, the landless movement and migration. Although such issues are more or less present and intense according to each rural space analysed, they are part of the negative impact that rural workers face from top-down policies linked with modernisations of space in Amazonia during the dictatorship government period.

The main conclusion about the route and challenges discussed in Chapter Five is that the greatest challenge to transform a socio-environment political programme into public policy is to change the government structure. It links two government departments (the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry for Agrarian Reform and Development) to respond to the local communities' varied needs. The research indicates that *ProAmbiente* and other similar programmes that pay individual families for environmental protection should not be conducted in isolation, but need to be supplemented by complementary programmes that address local people's needs such as educational and health programmes and land titling services.

NGOs as Intermediaries between Government and Local Communities

Chapter Six centred on the intermediary level of NGOs that have linked with the government and local communities. It aimed to identify the type of practices of the intermediary organisation in the *ProAmbiente* and its contribution to establish and strengthen interactions with the programme and the local communities. The findings from analysis on organisations have demonstrated that they have helped interaction with the remote communities that were outside of basic services' access and programme actions. The analysis of practices of the NGOs FASE and FANEP demonstrated that the long-term construction of the *ProAmbiente* was an important characteristic that has influenced practices in local communities. This is a good example of the enactment interaction based on long-term relationships, which contributed to build an organisational culture to put pressure on the national government. The relationship between grassroots organisations and small agriculturists had influenced the creation of an organisational culture to demand improvement for local people's livelihoods in the most remote rural areas. A particular challenge is thrown up where analysis is of NGO projects and the relationships between different organisations.

In the examples of the FANEP in the Rio Capim pole, the challenge is how to promote changes according to local people's priorities. Finding from this research demonstrated in Chapter Six is that the participatory approaches have been carried out to access local people's knowledge. However, the fixed aim of the programme and the well structured topics emphasised through workshops, training and exercises in communities have not considered the diverse meanings of community in the poles.

Community in a pole is considered as homogeneous. This study identified that the sense of community from the point of view of local people has a range of signifiers that represent dynamics of interaction. Although the structure of a community is organised according a cultural identity constructed for long generations, they maintain a dynamic interaction between them and with other organisations that support their priorities and claims for changes.

The conclusion that the analysis of the NGOs as intermediaries between government and local communities brings is that the presence of intermediary NGOs is fundamental from three perspectives. Firstly, they promote the strengthening of the power of local communities, secondly, they create bridges between federal government and local communities; and thirdly, they promote participatory processes by engaging rural communities' culture and knowledge in the *ProAmbiente* design. However, once the programme started the NGOs absorbed federal government structures, interests and priorities and have not properly taken into account the diversity of the various communities' identities and their meanings and expectations of specific issues such as land, education and health. One could say that the participatory process carried by the NGOs in charge of the *ProAmbiente* has been limited to making the environment the only priority to emerge from the rural peoples' involvement in the programme.

Impacts of the *ProAmbiente*

Chapter Seven examined the programme actions and their impacts on local communities. Chapter Seven has demonstrated that access to the meanings of community from local points of view presented an important issue to understand how

communities have been constructed and reconstructed their life, their resources and the cultural identity that result from types of interaction. The methodological strategies carried out from the focus group exposed in Chapter Four demonstrate the importance of access to local communities and of local people's own concepts of reality. Chapter Seven has shown that knowledge produced for long generations enables an understanding of why some policies carried out before the *ProAmbiente* failed to have a positive impact on the rural space. This was the case for *FNO-Especial* as it did not take into account how the communities were organised socially for production and the kind of support needed for production. In the *ProAmbiente* however, these issues were considered. In the pole of Rio Capim, for example, local people have been trained to incorporate new strategies and new skills and abilities to expand their production. Such capacity building has changed the way in which rural communities deal with the environment. For example, the communities have abandoned the 'slash and burn' methods for land clearance and substituted instead 'wood slash and laceration' so as to transform rubbish in organic fertilizer. Taking the environment into account, this has had a real impact on the communities' productive practice. Despite an accumulation of generations-old knowledge, the communities are open to new strategies for change.

However, this does not mean that the communities want to change their methods of production entirely. For example, the implementation of new productive activities such as beekeeping and fish farming are important for income generation and environment protection but they are not part of the Rio Capim communities' knowledge and culture for rural production. Although these activities have shown positive results in some communities in the *ProAmbiente*, this does not mean that such activities will be effective in every community. Beekeeping and fish farm

projects cannot be replicated without paying attention to local people's knowledge and culture of these activities. Much also depends on people's desires to incorporate new form of production if they lack the skills to implement such production. If the *ProAmbiente* insists on implementing production activities that are different from the local communities' culture, then the possibility of the programme failing is high.

People participation in the *ProAmbiente* design has brought about a significant change in the communities' social practices. The result of this research identifies that local people have been encouraged to discuss between themselves ways to reduce the impacts of their economic activities on stocks of natural resources. For example, in Vila do Galho, local people emphasise the significance of these environmental resources for the continued existence of their communities, for income generation and for their families' food supply. From the people participation in the *ProAmbiente* design, core awareness about the environment has been built. People recognise that they need to preserve their natural resources to enable new generations to use them. The critical issue is that they currently depend on these same resources to supply their socio-economic needs. If the system of environment services payment takes a long time to be effectively implemented, the chances are that the local communities will not continue to protect the environment adequately. If the local communities continue to have negative impacts on the environment, all the environment awareness work will be lost. Consequently, the *ProAmbiente* may lose credibility if the programme does not take action quickly.

Chapter Seven has demonstrated that through the use of participatory approaches, local people are able to combine their accumulated knowledge from close interaction

with the environment. For example, communities were able to draw figures showing how they divide and use their lands and what types of practices are more suitable for each area (see figures 5 and 8). Participatory approaches applied by NGOs have contributed to local people's understanding of diverse cultural identities and local knowledge resources produced for long generations (see Chapter Six). Local people can understand that such diversity is part of the dynamics of society and that the existence of the different groups' identities, priorities and knowledge resources result from the interactions that they develop in direct contact with the environment.

However, what they were not able to understand was that they had been involved in a contradictory process of change that could negatively affect their lives and could even be contrary to their own interests. For instance, the *ProAmbiente* uses the dominant idea of community as homogeneous and applies the concepts of 'closed' and 'open' communities. In the sense of *ProAmbiente*, the communities are defined geographically and by their main production, i.e. by where people live and what they produce. Only people in a geographically specific community who lived by fishing or agricultural activities were included. However, the concept of community for the *ProAmbiente* is oversimplified. The results of focus group assessment done by this research (Chapter Seven) show that local people's concept of community is not only based on geographical and production patterns. The concept of community is much more complex and also involves elements of religion, forms of living and social interaction. The concept of community is involved in a social process that is not simply articulated in direct and immediate relations between people and environment but is historically constructed through all sorts of social practices. Chapter Seven has shown that religion is able to join people from different communities for a collective work, independent of where they live or what they produce. Forms of living and

social interaction are determined by their sense of family, of belonging to a group although people from different communities interact between themselves. Local people have diverse occupations that they work on simultaneously such as cultivation of crops, horticulture, fruit collection, fishing and so on. The peoples that arrived in the roadside colonies are chiefly from outside Amazonia and thus they are carriers of other regional cultures with adaptive systems different from the traditional Amazonian *caboclos*. Food habits, socialisation methods, worldviews, technical experience and economic expertise all differ. The people who do not have registered lands have joined together to request land registration even if they are located in different geographical areas. Thus, the meaning of community can not be seen as strict. It is indeed very fluid and open to adjustments once the configuration of the communities points to the fact that local people's livelihoods are involved in diverse socio-cultural practices.

This shows that the NGOs despite their participatory approaches in carrying out the *ProAmbiente* do not view local people's interactions as strategies to secure the communities' own interests, to make stronger people and communities' relationships or as ways to bring about changes in the implementation of the *ProAmbiente*. The focus group carried with young people (Chapters Six and Seven) shows that there are expectations that the results of *ProAmbiente* will improve communities' economic status and promote healthier social interactions between communities. The biggest impact of the *ProAmbiente's* concept of community is that it may make interaction between what it calls 'close' and 'open' communities harder. However, Chapter Seven has demonstrated that communities' interactions are of real interest for the new generations. For instance, the young people from the former slave communities no longer want to continue to be isolated. They want to interact with other

communities on production to social levels. This therefore demonstrates that the *ProAmbiente* needs to re-evaluate the programme's meaning of community.

Participation and Power Relations in the *ProAmbiente* Model

Participation and power relations are a critical issue in the *ProAmbiente* model. Chapter Seven has demonstrated that land and credit have influenced the configuration of power. Taking the example of Rio Capim, Chapter Seven has demonstrated that credit access has been dominated only by those who have land registration. The data presented in Chapter Seven demonstrates that credit policy was designed to be assessed by small-scale agriculturists, however it has not been adapted in light of changes. It is difficult to find local people who are happy with the forms of credit access. For example, in the pole of Rio Capim, local people have lived and worked there for long time but, predominantly, they do not have title documents and thus cannot qualify for the available credit programmes. This requires some changes in the definition of the criteria of the credit access such as land registration and concerns as to how the Units of Family Production (UFP) are organised. The assessment of the UFP is required for credit policies; however what the credit policy defines as results to be achieved is different from local people's view of the resources produced. While the former prioritises economic results, the latter is based on a model of environment conservation. If the *ProAmbiente* does not negotiate with banks for a new model of credit access and results evaluation, it will be difficult for many UFP to access credit to carry out new forms of production. If rural communities do not have credit access they will return to traditional forms of production based on 'slash and burn'. Chapter Three has demonstrated that the model of the *ProAmbiente* is very well designed, however Chapter Seven has demonstrated

that there is a great gap between what was planned and what has been executed. The *ProAmbiente* does not take into account land registration, does not clearly define the forms of payment for environment services and does not admit new families after commencement. Its cycle of planning is thus closed and it does not, therefore, offer the possibility of replication to new poles. This means that the incorporation of participation and the involvement of local communities in knowledge production are not sufficient. Although the intermediary NGOs in the *ProAmbiente* use the participatory approach in issues of project implementation to support and expand local production resources, the investment in external organisational cultures such as banks is an important issue to take into account. This is especially true when dealing with the existent power relations between other organisations that interact at local level.

Conflicts of interest in the use and occupation of land at local level is another difficult task in the consolidation of the *ProAmbiente*, even in poles that are defined as being in an advanced phase of implementation. The land struggles require special attention when dealing with conflicts in defining areas of production and areas of conservation. This is particularly evident when certain rural communities do not want to take part in the *ProAmbiente* because the programme incentives in some way impose specific forms of production. For example, Chapter Seven has demonstrated that certain activities supported by the *ProAmbiente* (beekeeping in Rio Capim and fishing in Marajo) are not what some communities want to practise. This can create conflicts in the form of land use in rural production. In addition, this example corroborates the hypothesis that the state impacts rural communities on their culture of production and on their methods of dealing with the environment.

Chapter Seven has demonstrated that local people are concerned that the programme will continue to over stress issues regarding forest conservation. Local people want the *ProAmbiente* to incorporate other land issues such as land reform, geographical demarcation and registration. At the moment, local people emphasis that it is more important to prioritise legalization of land properties rather than to decide what should be produced. Taking into account that tenure security is a significant task in poverty reduction; the results of this research indicate that the *ProAmbiente* should be the main vehicle to negotiate this issue with other government departments. If the *ProAmbiente* positively negotiates tenure security, chances are that local people will gain greater confidence in the programme.

Final Considerations

The programme actions, through the NGO practices in Rio Capim enabled individuals and groups to build the information that they needed to reach their targets and has informed how they have constructed their social, cultural and economic resources. It also supports an increase in local people's accountability of the whole development process. However, the information produced and the problems encountered need to be used to improve the programme's implementations in all aspects including social issues such as health, education, tenure and land access. So far, the programme has given priority to increasing production in the context of environmental conservation.

The interaction of the *ProAmbiente* in the pole of Rio Capim has been a positive feature. Under FANEP's intermediary practices, this programme interacts at many levels to involve local people in the programme. However, one of the important

conclusions of this thesis is that interaction between government and local communities is a complex task that involves a range of different relations at local level. This indicates that programmes with a similar scope to the *ProAmbiente* cannot be carried out only by one government department and particularly by the Department of the Environment alone. This induces an imbalance in favour of the environment over social issues. In regions where social problems are high, social issues cannot be placed as secondary.

Another conclusion of this research is that local people's livelihood resources are connected, modelled and mediated by power relations. The recognition that the expression of needs and priorities takes place in a context marked by power relations on the basis of cultural attributes is crucial to making any development programme effective. However, difficulties often arise in analysis of the space of interaction at local level policy actions and its impact on local people. This is because power relations are not always evident. This study has demonstrated the conflicts of interests and power relations between the stakeholders involved in the *ProAmbiente*. The most evident manifestation of power is the route of changes from local people demands to *ProAmbiente* aims and actions. However, more studies are needed to understand how power may be balanced in programmes sponsored and carried out by government. More research may help the understanding of how local people's demands may scale up and scale down without a loss of priorities.

From the use of participatory approaches, local people are able to demonstrate their livelihoods, resources and to debate their skills, abilities and knowledge that have been constructed for long generations. However, local people's expectations rise proportionally when they are asked to take part in an interactive process of

participation. The experience of the *ProAmbiente* shows that if a governmental programme aims to have a positive impact on social, cultural, political, economic and environmental aspects, strategies should be developed in the specific situations in which the knowledge is created, structured and used. If people's expectations are not answered with effective actions that bring direct benefit to local communities, then one could say the use of participatory approaches is a limited means of gaining information solely for government interests. This corroborates with the initial hypothesis that once local people's knowledge and demands are encompassed, state-sponsored programmes change local people's proposals to absorb their own development approaches. The state takes actions that do not prioritise people's demands. Thus, communities' priorities do not come first.

The analyses of the expectations of all those interviewed (from community members, government officials and members of non-governmental organisations - intermediaries between government and local people), are perceived as positive in relation to environmental services. Although the communities reacted positively when they could see real benefits from compensation for environmental services, they argue that the emphasis on beneficiaries is a weak point of the programme. One of the specific conclusions that this study points out is that despite the level of awareness in the communities and the work the institutions have carried out in terms of the concept of compensation for environmental services, there is need for investment to increase education about the environment.

The *ProAmbiente* is a pioneering programme with good potential to influence changes in Amazonia. Although some actions have experienced positive outcomes such as in Rio Capim, as public policy this programme is still in its developmental

stage. This study points out that the feasibility of this programme as public policy depends on a range of factors to be examined before it is extended to other areas. Among these factors, there is a need to take into account effectively the diversity of cultural identities and economic resources in the area. Findings from the pole of Rio Capim show that local people have developed a broad knowledge of the resources produced. This knowledge is combined rather than used as a single activity such as fishing, agriculture or extractive activities. It implies that each resource should be utilised more or less intensely according to local knowledge.

The work of the institutions, namely governmental agencies, associations, unions, cooperatives, churches, NGOs especially FASE and FANEP, are very close to the problems of the communities. These organisations are working alongside the communities to contribute to an awareness of resource management and sustainability. However, even with governmental agencies and communities working next to each other, this research identified that more investment is needed to meet the basic needs of the rural workers in terms of infrastructure, education, health and to contribute to the land reform problems that are faced daily by local people. For example, local government support such as improvements in infrastructure (local road conditions and market accessibility) is a significant factor to help retain families in rural areas. In another example in Rio Capim, the *ProAmbiente* has used certification (see Chapter Four) as one way to distinguish and add value to production. In spite of all these efforts, problems such as the chaotic land title situation, technical resources and financial viability makes actions more complex and have been a challenge for the programme.

In such a context, this research shows that more action is also needed to intensify the interaction between governmental agencies and organisations that have been working alongside communities to achieve the production and conservation aims of the programme. The challenge is to find a way to balance these activities so that one does not dominate the other. It will help to find ways to strengthen interactive participation to meet the basic needs of the rural communities and at the same time contribute to an awareness of the issues of forest management.

Despite of a range of circumstances involving limitations on land use, which depends on specific reality observed, the key point is to question whether the creation of conservation units would be beneficial or not in terms of the possibilities and effectiveness of implementation of PES instruments for local communities. Even in cases in which the private ownership of territories or resources is clearly defined, it is difficult to establish in practice the relation between the “producers” of the environmental services and their beneficiaries. Other forms of compensation, such as provision of public services (education and health care are the most commonly cited), are also valid forms of payments that help to ensure that rural workers remain in the forest.

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Appendix

Data Collection Guidelines

Interview Structure 1: Programme Donors and Institutional Partner Managers

Key objectives:

- (1) To identify programme changes from the micro level to the macro level and vice versa (bottom up – top down);
- (2) To identify the key features of the programme designed to empower the communities;
- (3) To understand the nature of empowerment in terms of who does the valuing and what is valued in terms of well-being;
- (4) To identify the knowledge concepts involved (class or group that maintains control, authority and legitimacy over the knowledge produced);
- (5) To distinguish the process of the programme in its diverse phases (negotiations, implementation and consolidation);
- (6) To observe how the programme interacts or create links with the communities at local level.

Interview Issues:

- a) Criteria for choosing the level of programme focus;
- b) Planning for implementing the phases of the programme (negotiation, implantation, consolidation, etc.);
- c) Knowledge concepts emphasized in key activities of the programme;
- d) Forms of community involvement in the programme (cultural, economic activities, group organizations, etc);
- e) Concept of empowerment of community focused on by the programme;
- f) Forms of links between the programme and organizations;
- g) Motivation and influence on popular participation;
- h) Difficulty of programme implementation at the local level;
- i) Skills and abilities emphasised by the programme for popular participation.

Interview Structure 2: Community Group Organisations

Key Objectives:

- (1) To understand the interpretation and expectations of empowerment from the programme and the communities;
- (2) To distinguish the process of community participation in the diverse phases of the programme (negotiation, implantation and consolidation);
- (3) To understand people's expectations for community development in their social, economic and cultural aspects;

Interview Issues:

- a) Organisational structure: date of establishment; location; number of members;
- b) Level of people's participation in the programme;
- c) Motivation and influence on people's participation;
- d) People's expectation for self control of their economic activity and over the decision-making process;
- e) People's expectations for the improvement of livelihoods: income, food, well-being (health and education), vulnerability (work/job), basic services access (drinkable water and electricity) and use of natural resources.

Focus Group Discussion: Community Group Organisations and Households (Men, Women, Young)

Key Objectives:

- (1) To distinguish the process of community participation in the phases of the programme (negotiation, implantation and consolidation);
- (2) To understand people's expectations for control of their own economic activity and other decision-making processes;
- (3) To identify how the communities understand the participation process from the perspective of knowledge and cultural diversity;

Focus Group Discussion issues:

- a) Motivation and influence on people's participation;
- b) Level and forms of participation of individuals, families, groups, and community;
- c) People's belief in the skills and abilities (knowledge) needed to better defend and promote the improvement of livelihoods;

- d) People's expectations for control of their economic activity and over the decision-making process;
- e) People's expectations for improvements of livelihoods: income, well-being (health and education), vulnerability (work/job), basic services access (e.g. drinkable water and electricity) and use of natural resources;
- f) People's values in terms of well-being, economic and social aspects.